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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXLVII. SEPTEMBER 1919. Vol. CCVI.

1909–1919.

BY "BARTIMEUS."

THE Flag Lieutenant, one of an assembly of Admirals and their staffs grouped about the neighbourhood of the Achilles Statue, stood struggling with a pair of new and refractory kid gloves.

When he was quite young—a midshipman, in fact—he had participated in a review of the Fleet at Southend. For three days the Fleet lay at the mercy of the people. For three days a sea-sick rabble of unnumbered thousands poured on board his ship. For three days they trampled on the cherished enamel of his picket-boat, scattered shrimps' heads and banana peel broadcast about the immaculate upper-deck, employed the interior of the after-turret for purposes undreamed of in the philosophy of its designer. . . . Uncomprehending, incomprehensible.

Now, at 9 A.M. on July 19, 1919, as he stood watching the blue and gold, the white cap-covers and aiguillettes of that naval gathering of the clans, in the unfamiliar setting of a London park, the review of ten years before came back to his mind for reasons quite beyond his powers of analysis.

A brother staff-officer strolled towards him, the ferrule of his scabbard clinking on the gravel. "I bet a bob my Old Man won't last the course," said he with a laugh. "We had an endurance trial on Sunday, and——"

The Flag Lieutenant smiled rather absently, because his mind was back in the gunroom flat of a now obsolete battleship, hovering round his sea-chest on which sat an entire family party eating cold currant pudding out of a string bag. "Come on, 'Orace!" a

stout matron had shouted to one of her roving progeny. "You just sit down this minute, and you shall 'ave 'arf a banana."

"Half a banana!" On the lid of *his* sea-chest, just when he wanted to shift into plain clothes and go ashore.

How he had hated that party!

Half an hour passed, and every few minutes a fresh arrival stepped out of his car at the kerb. The man whose blockading squadron had squeezed the last inch out of the strangle-hold on Germany stood on the outskirts of the group.

"Ain't he got a lot of gold stuff on his sleeve!" said a maiden.

"Come on," retorted her friend; "there's a better-lookin' one over 'ere. We ain't got all the mornin' to waste."

Verily, verily, a prophet was not without honour, save among his own people, thought the Flag Lieutenant.

The Flag Lieutenant's companion surveyed the scene. "Funny thing for the Navy to be doing, somehow," he said, "marching through London." It didn't seem to occur to him that the Navy had done anything to justify the exertion. His wandering eye embraced the demure gathering of the W.R.N.S., resting in the park chairs with a foresight that was somehow typical, while every one else stood about. A few pairs of eyes met his with veiled feminine interest.

"And why the devil they want to disband the 'Wrens,'" he continued, without apparent relevance, "is more than I can understand."

"Fall in, please," said a voice, and the gathering clanked into the roadway to take up its positions. From beyond the trees on the borders of the Park rose a sound like the murmur of the sea. The sightseers began to drift towards the gates.

The Flag Lieutenant took up his allotted position at the end of a line of ten other Flag Lieutenants and Secretaries. Ahead, five deep and thirty strong, were the Flag Officers ranged behind the Commander-in-Chief. Somewhere along the line a bugle sounded. The march had started.

After the comparative tranquillity of the Park the tumult of Knightsbridge was like the roaring of a great fire. As if to meet a blaze of coloured flames they passed into the streets, and out of that great sea of waving flags and streamers came the passionate exultant roar of Victory.

For a while the Flag Lieutenant marched with his eyes on the back of the fellow staff-officer's head in front of him, conscious only of sharing in some tremendous emotional outburst. It did not somehow occur to him that he or those about him were the objects of the storm of cheers that beat about his ears like hail on a window-pane. Then he turned his head slightly, and met the eyes of a stout man with a red moustache

standing on the edge of the crowd.

"Bravo, boy! Oh, bravo, laddie!" roared the stout man, laughing full in his face with affectionate comradeship.

It was the impression of a second, one note separated from all that vast cataclysm of sound, one face detached from all the blur of shouting mouths and brandished bunting; but it filled the Flag Lieutenant with an extraordinary desire to go back and shake hands with the stout man. It mattered not that Czecho-Slovak private and Chinese colonel might have caught the stout man's eye and received just as spontaneous a greeting. At that moment, as far as the Flag Lieutenant was concerned, it was his procession. All London was there to shout at him, and it is not unlikely that at some moment or other a similar harmless illusion filled the finite heart of every participator in that Triumph, were it that of *poilu* or admiral, Merchant Jack and mounted general, even down to the bull-dog . . .!

Gradually as he became accustomed to the uproar and kaleidoscopic effect of the crowd, he found himself quietly gathering impressions, cameo-cut memories of the route; they were passing a huge hotel, a great cliff of masonry with every window blocked by faces. Tier by tier his eyes travelled to the top storey, beyond it to a single attic window. A woman in black sat there alone, her arms outstretched on the sill, and her head, bowed so that her face was invisible, resting on her sleeve.

Long after they had passed, that forlorn figure lingered in the Flag Lieutenant's memory. She had meant to share in Britain's Triumph — wave a flag, perhaps; and then her brave woman's heart had failed her, suddenly remembering the one face that could never be raised to hers.

South of the river it seemed as if the intensity of the acclamation redoubled. Never in his life had he realised that the human voice, however greatly magnified by numbers, could rise to such a gale of sound. His eyes roved over that sea of faces eighty and a hundred deep, and instantly he recognised them. This was the People. There, repeated over and over again in countless thousands, was the family party who had picnicked on the lid of his sea-chest ten years before, cheering him out of the depths of their hearts, out of the squalor and dirt of their surroundings.

Yet in some indefinable way they had changed. Ten years ago they would have greeted the Navy with uncomprehending noisiness, exulting over a great possession about which they understood nothing nor wished to understand. To-day they welcomed Admirals, midshipmen, bluejackets, and "Wrens," as comrades side by side with whom they had achieved victory. "Good old Beatty!" shrilled Sall of the pickle factory; just, in fact,

as she would presently acclaim her Bill, marching with the Mons Star on his breast and three wound stripes on his sleeve. . . .

They, too, had done their bit, these people of the mean streets and looming factories—earned their right to participate in this triumph; and somehow symbolic of their share in the War was their share in this long day. They fainted as they had fainted in food queues, from weariness and hunger; the procession marched by in all its panoply of standards and medal ribbons: they for the most part were black—memento of the years of heart-sick anxiety that some moment had changed to an abiding sorrow.

A girl broke out of the crowd, dodged under a policeman's arm, and stood hesitating as the lines swung past. Then, acting on some mysterious impulse, she stepped forward a pace and thrust a bunch of red roses into the Flag Lieutenant's hand. For an instant their eyes met, and she was back again, swallowed in the roaring crowd before he could thank her.

Rent for half an hour's rest on the lid of his sea-chest, ten years before, had been paid. The Flag Lieutenant swallowed something in his throat that seemed about the size and consistency of a billiard ball. It had been paid a thousand-fold.

He wished that ere the night he might find some service he could perform on behalf of the Navy that would "square yards" for that pretty act.

Onward through South London, north over Westminster Bridge, and the procession was back in what was to the Flag Lieutenant a more familiar environment. They turned into Whitehall, and caught a glimpse ahead of the white cenotaph reared in the centre of the thoroughfare above the ripple of flags and marching men.

The Flag Lieutenant knew, as every one knew, what the inscription was that would presently meet his eyes. He had intended, when raising his hand to the salute, to try and visualise one face of all the glorious dead he had called friends—that of his father. Yet, when he drew near, the severe beauty of the memorial, with its four guards bowed above their rifle-butts, the exquisite simplicity of that single sentence cried to him that the dead were no longer fathers or chums—neither brothers nor husbands—but one vast calm Spirit brooding in love over all.

So they passed, and the cheering, dulled in the presence of that beautiful conception in white plaster, broke out afresh like a torrent bursting a dam.

The broad façade of Buckingham Palace loomed up at the end of the Mall's tricolour perspective. The Flag Lieutenant craned his neck to catch a glimpse of his Admiral ahead. The march was nearly over, and the Flag Lieutenants were congratulating themselves in undertones on the staying powers of their "masters." The cheering on either side

had become almost unheard from very monotony; but the boys of Greenwich School, led by an impassioned Chief Petty Officer, turned the weary eyes of the column towards them with smiling appreciation. Chelsea Pensioners, with tremulous hands raised to the salute, gave splashes of vivid crimson to right and left; and then the step quickened. All eyes turned towards the beloved familiar figure standing in the pavilion of green and gold: hands went up in salute, and the Flag Lieutenant found his dry lips shaping the words that brought every evening of his life to a close—

"The King, God bless him!"

. . . . . .

The Flag Lieutenant had finished dinner and stood on the steps of his club watching the crowd surging along Piccadilly towards Hyde Park. The sky was illumined fitfully by the glare of bonfires to the westward, and the mild damp air hummed with a multitude of voices.

A club-mate came out of the vestibule behind him and stopped to light a cigarette. "Care to come to a dance?" he asked. "Only just round the corner—Berkeley Square."

The Flag Lieutenant hesitated. The Burgundy he had drunk at dinner said it would be a good thing to wind up the evening in the company of pretty women. For an instant he had a vision of white necks and shoulders rising out of silken rainbows; the lure of violin music sounded in his ears. Then he remembered that his debt to the People for a bunch of red roses remained unpaid. Perhaps the Burgundy had a say in that matter too, for it was a rather far-fetched sort of notion, quite undefined. . . .

"No, thanks," he said. "I'm feeling a bit fagged after that Marathon this morning! I think I shall smoke a pipe in the Park and watch the fireworks."

He was in uniform, but he put on a rainproof coat, buttoned it up under his chin, and, pulling his cap over his eyes, joined the throng setting westward.

The faces round him looked tired, he thought, but somehow very happy. Working people in their best clothes, mostly: elderly couples, girls hanging on young men's arms, children trailing silently in the wake of their parents. They walked in orderly composure as if taking part in some procession regulated by an inflexible and invisible force.

Inside Hyde Park there was the same grave sobriety of demeanour. The ragged outline of the trees stood up dark against the illuminations in the sky. Fiery serpents of light rose writhing out of the darkness, burst into a myriad stars, and descended in cascades of colour that lit the upturned faces of slow-moving thousands.

The Flag Lieutenant lit a pipe and strolled northwards towards the open spaces. Here and there little groups of men and girls were dancing in the

fantastic light. Lovers sat with their arms round each other in the shadows, oblivious as the dead. And all round was the restless ever-shifting crowd, oppressive in its vastness. Rain began to fall.

Then, from the darkness of a clump of trees came the squeal of a woman. A girl came stumbling and panting towards him.

"Oh!" she gasped, "I'm frightened!" and nearly threw herself into the Flag Lieutenant's arms.

"What's frightened you?" he asked.

"A man," she replied, hands raised to the disorder of hat and hair. "Pullin' me about . . . the beast!"

The Flag Lieutenant stared towards the trees. A shadow slunk off amid the shadows.

"Well," he said at length, "you're all right now, aren't you?" He looked down at the plain anæmic face of a domestic servant in her Sunday finery.

"Yes." She considered him for a moment. "But I'd like to stay with you for a bit."

He drew two chairs together and they sat down. His companion's shoulder rested comfortably against his arm. She gave a little sigh of contentment and stared gravely at the illuminated sky.

"Why did you bolt to me?" asked the Flag Lieutenant after a while, — "when you were frightened?"

She turned her head. "Ain't you in the Navy?"

He nodded. She made as if to speak, thought better of it, and resumed her observation of the fireworks, lips a little apart. The rain fell steadily.

THE FUTURE: RUNNING THE U.S. MAIL.

BY P. I. X.

LOTUS-EATING down among the South Sea Islands, knocking about in a little old topsail schooner, trading a bit for occupation and not for profit, yet getting out with a pleasant balance on the right side, I had drowsily drifted down the river of life ten years nearer to the Great Uncharted Sea.

When I sloughed off my uniform at the end of the Great War, worn out in body, weary in mind, and sick with the so-called civilisation which had produced such a Frankenstein monster, I had promised myself a two-year holiday far from cities, telephones, and newspapers, and the two years had quietly and unobtrusively grown into ten.

Now, having travelled nearly around the world by devious and dawdling routes, and that morning having sauntered down the gang-plank of a rusty and battered old tramp steamer, I was standing in a street at Plymouth, rather dazed and bewildered by the noise and crowd of the busy seaport town.

Without a moment's warning, with an appalling suddenness, I staggered beneath a tremendous blow between my shoulder-blades, and a voice roared in my ear—"Pix, by all that's holy!"

Half turning, I saw a short stocky man, in a blue uniform, who was now trying to dislocate the bones in my right hand, and more or less succeeding.

"You don't know me," he shouted, laughing. "But you're the same old, thin, dried-up specimen you always were. I'd have known you anywhere. I'm Pank."

And it was Pank. Much broader, and therefore, by an optical illusion, much shorter; older and filled out; wearing a beard instead of being clean shaven; but Pank all the same. Pank, the active microbe, who in his lurid career at Felixstowe had bent many a Hun, and could always be relied upon to shake into activity even the most lethargic jelly-fish.

In an amazingly short space of time my empty glass was on the table before me, he had sucked out an outline sketch of my last ten years as though he were a large-bore semi-rotary bilge pump, found that I was thinking of returning to Canada, and had departed after saying—

"You're coming with me in the *Swift*. New boat. Open your eyes. I'm running the U.S. Mail. It's two o'clock now; be at the White Line landing-stage at four o'clock. Hand-baggage only. One berth returned; lucky, wasn't it. Expect to be properly gouged for it. See you later."

Galvanised into activity by his breezy energy, I made more haste than I had for years, and was at the landing-stage at four o'clock. Here I found a motor-boat waiting, her sides covered with soft fenders, and when my scant hand-luggage was put on board we pushed off. As we rounded the dock I saw her in all her splendour, lying at a buoy in the harbour, the *Swift*, a great triplane flying-boat.

But such a boat. She was pure white—hull, struts, and wings. Her six propellers seemed to be of some bright metal, for their curved surfaces caught the sun and winked points of fire at me. She loomed very large as we approached her, the top plane towering above us as we passed under her lower wing; but until the motor-boat came alongside her light steel hull I did not realise how big she was, so well was she proportioned. She was clean as a whistle, without a single excrescence, beautifully streamlined. The simplicity of the whole design was a revelation.

The man in the motor-boat told me that the soft fenders of his craft were to prevent his scratching the "anti-skin friction paint." I asked him what it was for. He was very vague, but thought it made her slip easily through the air, everything was covered with it, "wings and everything."

Climbing up a short companion-ladder and passing through a gangway, I was met by a steward who was apparently expecting me, as on giving my name he collected my hand-luggage without a word. He led me down a short alleyway. It opened into a long narrow dining-saloon, about twelve feet wide and forty feet long, set out with small tables and easy-chairs. There were a number of passengers fussing about and blocking the narrow space. As he led me aft I noticed that on each side of the saloon were five cabin doors.

At the end of the saloon we passed through a door in the middle into a rather narrow passage, which dipped down quickly to give head room under the main spar and three fat steel cylinders, which came through the wall on one side and passed out on the other. The floor of the passage rose again to the level of the smoking-room deck. On each side of the smoking-room were five cabins. The steward opened one of the doors.

"'Ere you are, sir," he said.

It was a small place, not larger than eight feet long by six feet wide, and containing two fixed bunks, one above the other. All the fittings were of spartan simplicity and extremely light. It was lit from the ceiling. The steward showed me how to work the ventilators, because the glass ports were fixed and did not open.

"When in the hair we're 'ermetically sealed, so to speak," he explained.

On coming out of my cabin I was met by the purser. "The Skipper telephoned and told me to look out for you," he said.

I asked him what time we started. "We'll take the air about six o'clock," he replied, "unless the mails are delayed by the train wreck—a bad pile-up on the main line." And he offered the observation that he considered railway travelling dangerous, now that all the mail trains had been speeded up because of the competition of aeroplanes. "The road beds and rails are too light to stand the racket," he explained.

In reply to questions, he continued—

"Our scheduled time is seventeen hours, but we usually do the three thousand miles in fifteen, and will land in New York at three in the morning. No, it's not nine hours; you see we go west with the sun.

"We always make the run at night. You can post a letter as late as four o'clock in London and have it on a desk in an office in New York at eight o'clock next morning. Coming back? We leave at eleven o'clock in the morning, and the mails are delivered in London by ten o'clock.

"Then there's little room on board, and nothing to do, and while passengers are sleeping they don't take up much space or move about. We have forty on board; you were lucky to get a passage. All men this time. We occasionally have ladies, but not often; they prefer the surface liner, because they can dance and have a good time."

And then he told me what my passage would cost. The amount rather shook me. I asked if many people travelled by air when they had to pay such rates.

"List always full up," he replied. "Speed of transport means longer life, and they don't mind paying for life. Most of the passengers are men in big business, famous surgeons, or international lawyers, and they actually make money by it. They like to finish a day's work in London, have a day and a half in New York, and be back to carry on the following day. They have got to sleep wherever they are, and might as well sleep on board. They tell me they sleep like the dead. I suppose the idea of doing anything at such speed lets down their nerves. There's one stock speculator crosses with us every two weeks; he says it's the only decent night's rest he gets.

"By the way, your passage-money includes dinner; the line sets out to do you tremendously well. There's only room for half the passengers in the dining-saloon at one time; but dinner is on for three hours, and you can dine early or late. You will only get a cup of tea and a piece of toast in the morning, and have breakfast on shore."

He explained he would have to leave me.

"The Skipper told me you are an old flying-boat man," he said, "and, if he was not on board, to introduce you to the Chief Engineer."

I followed the purser forward through the smoking-room, and, by means of a

side door, to the engine-room. I was introduced to the Chief. As was to be expected, he was a Scotchman — Angus Munroe.

To him I opened my heart. I explained I was a poor Rip Van Winkle who had not seen a flying-boat or chewed on a figure for ten years, that I was bursting with curiosity, and in the sacred name of pity to tell me the horse-power, weight, dimensions, and speed of his wonderful boat.

His long face cracked in a smile.

"Ay," he said. "The Skipper told me you learned him to fly in a bit boat weighing six tons."

He waved his hand at three long fat tubes running athwart ship overhead, from side to side of the boat, on a level with the lower wings.

"Turbines," he explained. "Thirty thousand horse. Steam. But vara likely ten years ago you peddled aboot with internal combustion fakements—chattering, clattering, and onreliable. But yon's power for you—silent, reliable, sweet, and done oop in a penny packet. Vera likely in your heathen islands ye never heard tell of Janes Fluid. We make steam wi' it, instead of water. I could do wi' holding the patent. Condensing? That was the deeficulty. Great volumes of steam coming off at great velocity. But Janes Fluid and Toogood's condenser do the beesiness."

"One moment," I broke in. "Back in 1919 the destroyers of the 'flotilla leader' class had thirty thousand horse turbines."

"Ay," said Munroe, "I've rattled roond in them."

"If I remember rightly they were three hundred and fifty feet long and did thirty-five knots," I continued. "They carried two hundred and eighty tons of oil fuel. That was enough for eleven hours at full speed or three hundred and eighty-five miles. That is, they used twenty-three tons of fuel an hour."

"Mon, your memory's fine," assented the Chief. "Ye'll well remember they could dae fifteen knots for aboot a hunder and sixty hours on the same fuel, using maybe less than twa tons an hour.

"But yon's better engines. The laddie that deesigned them did a wairkman-like job. For an Englishman they're no sae dusty. But we're getting out a set on the Clyde that'll make him sit up.

"Fifteen tons of oil fuel an hour they eat developing full power. She steps along at three hunder knots. Forbye we tank seventy tons, it's enough for four hours and a bit, and that'll be fourteen hundred miles. But the Skipper dinna drive her at that, thank the Lord, for the bed-plates are a bit light for my immediate liking. Twa hunder's our cruising speed. That takes only three tons an hour and gies us maybe four thousand six hunder miles."

He opened a door in a bulkhead and showed me a small room. It was very bare. There

was a small bucket seat, a row of levers and a board covered with indicators.

"Yon's whaur the fireman sits," explained the Chief. "He holds the steam at six hunder poonds preesure and superheated to four hunder and seventy degrees. That's aw there is tae it."

He poured into my entranced ears the way the steam was made. The fuel tanks were below the second deck. The oil was pumped up to hot pipes and vapourised, and was then blown under pressure from a row of nozzles up on the generator tubes. The Janes Fluid flashed into steam somewhere in the tube, nobody knew just where. It boiled at twenty degrees below water and the superheating gave it a tremendous expansion.

"Boilers?" continued Munroe, in answer to a question. "We dinna have boilers to blow up and smash things to smithereens. The steam is made just as fast as we need it. It's as flexible as an auld glove. If a tube blaws out there's only a bit hiss and the body at the levers cuts it out. It shows on an indicator. Twa-three years ago they put in a thermostat to automatically control the pressure and temperature, but the elements in the gadgets were always warping and ganging wrang, and hand control is certain.

"But it's no like the auld times, when a trained engineer was an engineer. There's nae wairk tae be done; it's a drawing-room life. If anything gaes wrang it's—'Mister Munroe, the shore engineers are coming aboord.'"

He unscrewed an engine-room hatch. It was beautifully fitted, so that not a crack would show on the hull when it was closed. We stood together, with our heads out, and could look fore and aft along the hull and out on the snowy expanse of the lower plane. Immediately behind the trailing edge of the lower wing were two stream-lined funnels, protruding above the hull about a foot.

"She's twa hunder and forty feet from nose to tip of tail," Munroe told me. "She's licensed to weigh twa hunder tons when fully loaded. That's eleven and a half poonds a horse power. Wing surface? Fifty-one thousand square feet. That's maybe loaded to eight pounds a square foot.

"Four hunder and fifty feet she measures from wing tip to wing tip. You'll notice there's no wires exposed. And you'll notice maybe that each wing spar gets smaller as it goes out. That's the advantage of being big. Your small machine has a wing spar big enough to take the greatest load all the way out. Vara wasteful. But we're deesigned with tapering wing spars, steel girders they are, and so save weight and head resistance. Cost more? Vara likely, but consider the speed.

"Weight? Ye'll have played aboot with hunder-ton steel ten years ago, but we wairk with five-hunder-ton steel. Five times as light as aluminium for the same strength, it is.

"You're looking at the props. There's six of them, driven by shaft and gears, a smart job; the laddie that out them was nae fule. No engines out in the draught to make head reesistance. Murad steel they're made of, wood never stood up to the rain. Low speed, high effiociency, variable pitch, they are; absorbing five thousand horse-power each. I remember reading in an old report where a big expert said one propeller could only absorb twa thousand horse, but he was wrang.

"Getting off? I whack up the turbines with the blades of the propellers neutral, and then shift them to the correct pitch, and she accelerates on the water from nothing to seventy knots in less than forty seconds. She takes to the air inside of three-quarters of a mile."

Here we were interrupted by the tinkle of a bell, and the Chief told me the Skipper was on board in his cabin. If I went forward through the saloon I would find the door on the right-hand side, below the control cockpit.

I found Pank in his cabin, a roomy and comfortable place.

"Mail will be on board in ten minutes," he said, "and we'll push off at six sharp. Come up to the control cockpit with me and see us take off. We'll yarn about everything at dinner."

I followed Pank up a few shallow steps into the control cockpit. I was all agog for marvels, and was rather disappointed. It was a small place completely covered in with glass, following the stream-line shape of the hull. There was a padded basket seat for the pilot, and a control wheel and yoke, very similar to what I remembered in the old boats. The whole affair looked inadequate to handle the huge machine.

"Remember Queenie's servomotor?" Pank asked, noting the direction of my looks. "All the actual work of moving the control surfaces is done by an adaptation of his patent. The pilot has no strain on him at all, and yet has the feel of the machine."

Looking over the side, I saw a fast motor-launch racing towards us across the harbour, piled high with mail-bags, and in another moment the mail was being hoisted on board. A Quartermaster entered and settled himself down in the padded seat.

"When we start," Pank warned me, "lean up against the back bulkhead. We accelerate twice as quickly as a tube train, and you may lose your balance." And then to the Quartermaster: "Switch on all control telephones." The Quartermaster shut down a switch, and Pank said in his ordinary voice, "Purser, are all the passengers seated?"

"All correct, sir," said the voice of the purser at my elbow, and looking round I saw that it came from a large disk in the bulkhead.

"Engines?"

"Engines started, sir," said the voice of Angus Munroe.

Looking back at the planes, I saw that the propellers had

vanished. There was a soft whirr, a soughing like a wind in trees, and a very slight tremor through the structure of the boat.

Pank looked at a row of indicators on the wall. All had a white disk down except in the spaces numbered two and three. "Seal doors two and three," he ordered. The two white disks dropped in the indicators.

"Bow man, stand by to let go."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Engines. Stand by for four seconds half blade on port propellers."

"Standing by, sir."

"Bow man, let go."

"All gone, sir."

The tide carried us clear of the buoy.

"Engines."

The bow of the *Swift* swung round to starboard. She was heading for an open stretch of water.

"Quartermaster, ready. Engines, full."

I was pushed back against the bulkhead as though by a heavy hand as the boat leaped forward. The air speed indicator jumped to sixty knots, a hundred, a hundred and fifty, two hundred. There was no noise such as I had been accustomed to in a flying-boat. For an instant there had been the crash of a breaking bow wave, but now there was only a rubbing, rustling noise along the hull and an increased soughing of the wind in the tree-tops. I learned afterwards that this noise was made by the oil vapour being forced through the nozzles in the generators.

"Level at six hundred," ordered Pank.

"Level, sir."

"Engines, two hundred knots."

"Twa hunder, sir."

On a square ground-glass sheet in front of the Quartermaster appeared figures picked out in light.

"That's the wireless navigator," explained Pank. "He's on shore, but he keeps in touch with us all the way across. He gives us our latitude and longitude, the course to steer, and the air-speed to fly at. Simple, isn't it?"

All this time I had a dissolving view, a wild impressionistic sketch, of a sea snatched up in front of us and hurled behind. In six minutes, having travelled south, we were off Start Point, and the numbers on the wireless navigator, giving the course to steer, changed.

With a magnificent sweep of several miles and banking over slightly, the Quartermaster brought the *Swift* round on the new course and steadied. I noticed that he steered by a large gyro compass.

"No split-all turns for us," laughed Pank. "No spins, or loops, or rolls."

At the height of six hundred feet our tremendous speed was apparent. The sea appeared to be working on a roller, pulled up over the horizon and passed back under us. Surface ships were in front, and then behind. In nine minutes we had the Eddystone

abeam, and in another ten minutes we passed the Lizard.

Every eighteen seconds, as steady as clockwork, a minute was added to the longitude on the wireless navigator, showing we had gone westward one mile. Every ninety seconds a minute was taken off the latitude, showing we had made a mile of southing.

Pank glanced at the figures.

"There's a beam wind of about twenty knots from the north," he said. "We are headed a bit north of our course to allow for the drift. It doesn't alter our speed though. The wireless navigator ashore has all the weather reports and adjusts our speed accordingly. With a following wind he usually slows us down to save oil, and speeds us up when we run into a head wind later on. Sometimes he shoves us through a region of high head wind at top speed. What we loose on the swings we pick up on the roundabout, and manage to get in on time."

"She's a bit nose-heavy, sir," said the Quartermaster.

"Fireman, shift oil in forward tanks one and two," ordered Pank.

"When in the air," he explained, "we hold our fore-and-aft balance by an auxiliary elevator worked by a gyro through a servo-motor. But if the control surface has too much work to do it uses up power, so we shift oil fuel until we are in good trim."

I expressed amazement at the small amount of noise.

"Remember that small station that was working on silencing aeroplanes in 1918? It was washed out when the armistice was declared, but it had already laid the foundations for getting results."

Mr Wemp, the first mate, came into the control cockpit, and Pank suggested I should look over the boat with him. He took me through her from bow to stern.

She had two decks.

The first deck ran from the bow to the leading edge of the wings, and from the trailing edge forty-five feet back. In the very bow, covered in with glass shaped to the streamline of the hull, was an observation cabin for passengers, containing six easy-chairs. Passing aft, there was the wireless room and captain's cabin on the starboard side, and the officers' cabin on the port side.

In the wireless cabin were two lads, one on duty and the other taking a busman's holiday. The latter showed me round. It all looked simple enough: the valves, amplifiers, coils, and gear were boxed in, and only the switches and plugs showed. The aerials were carried inside the wings. I had expected a great display of all the mysterious paraphernalia of the wireless wizard, but was disappointed.

I was shown the machine which sent out five dots every thirty seconds so that the wireless navigator on shore could plot out the position of the boat. "The old Morse system of signals has been washed out," the lad explained; "and if you wish to speak to anybody in England or America,

we can plug you through on the wireless telephone."

Passing aft through the dining-saloon, with the ten double cabins, I found the galley. Here a chef was already active at an electric range with aluminium utensils. The most delectable odours were floating about.

Then came the engine-room, and aft of this the smoke-room and ten double cabins, with an alleyway running athwartship. We passed down a companion-ladder to the lower deck. This was a short deck, part in front of the engine-room and part behind. It had just sufficient accommodation for the crew.

"How many hands does this bus carry?" I asked.

"Eighteen in all, counting the five officers," the First Mate replied.

Then he took me down below and showed me the great oil tanks, which were crowded as near to the centre of gravity as possible, under the engine-room. I took a look at the lattice-work steel keel which ran from the bow to the stern. It looked very light for the job it had to do.

From here I went forward to Pank's cabin, and when the First Mate had taken over in the control cockpit, Pank came down and asked, "Will you dine outside with the millionaires and such-like, or shall we dine here?"

"Here," I replied, for I wanted him to talk.

After dinner, at his ease in an arm-chair, and prompted now and then by questions, he held forth.

"Remember in 1919," he began, "talking about a thirty thousand horse-power flying-boat? She could have been built then, even with the material and small engines available, but of course she would not have had the speed and carrying capacity the *Swift* has.

"In 1913 the Curtiss boat of sixty horse-power; in 1918 the *Felixstowe Fury* of eighteen hundred horse-power; in 1919 the first crossing of the Atlantic by a Curtiss built American flying-boat; in 1923, the first ten thousand horse-power steam turbine boat; and now the thirty thousand horse-power boat.

"Remember the land machine ramp at the end of the Great War; how they pranced on their hind legs and frothed about breaking the rails and shipping companies; and the blokes that put their good cash into companies that promised to carry mails and passengers by air over land and sea. What happened to 'em? Got into flat spins and crashed, mostly.

"Went into an optimistic company as a joy-stick merchant; saw the whole show from the inside. Tried to run mails in England. Weather conditions and the competitions of the railways did us down.

"Speed and reliability are the essence of mail carrying. It's the time taken from the office boy licking the stamp until the presentation paper-knife slits open the envelope at the other end that counts, and the letter has always got to get there. The only letter-

writers in a tremendous hurry, excepting the mad people who are frantically in love, are in the main centres of population, and they are connected by fast train services. Also the wireless telephone rather put a bend in the show—talk to anybody anywhere at any time.

"We had to have our aerodromes well out from the centre of the cities, land too hard to get inside. Had to whiz the mail out from the post office to the bus and tranship again at the other end. Took a lot of time. But the jolly old mail trains started from a point near the post office, and the letters were sorted while the train was travelling. Mist or fog, gales and snow, blew our time-tables sky-high. You should have seen us tearing our hair in bad weather. Of course bad weather sometimes interfered with the train service a bit, but not to the same extent. There was nothing in it so far as time was concerned, and they had us beaten four ways on reliability.

"We speeded up the faithful old sky waggons. But that meant bigger grounds to flop down into, so we had to go farther out from the cities. That made the time taken to get mails out to us a bit longer. We saved something at the receiving end by dropping the mails bang on top of the post office building. But the trains were speeded up too; they delivered special mails by motor-cycle straight from the railway station. We had nothing on them.

"But with the increase of speed we had more crashes in fog and mist. Rain was troublesome too. Summer wasn't so bad, but winter put us down and out. Mails have got to be carried every day in the year. Important mails were delayed and sometimes destroyed. That fed up the men who wrote 'em. We tried putting up a kite balloon above the mist and gliding down from that. Not good enough. The aerodromes were too small and the dashing aviators fetched up into houses, ditches, and trees. And of course a forced landing on the way under bad weather conditions was nearly always fatal. Insurance went higher than the machines.

"We weren't reliable enough. No commercial firm could stand the expense. The Government gave no assistance. The Treasury was squeezing every penny until Britannia squealed. We tried for two years and then my little lot went phut.

"Yes, the mail carriers had more success in less well-developed countries. Better weather conditions, longer runs, slower trains. But the money in it was nothing to write home about.

"Then passenger carrying.

"You remember the rather slow and clumsy four-engine aeroplanes they made such a fuss about? Well, they proved to be about the limit in size for a land machine. Bigger ones were tried, but they were no go. Landing wheel loads, landing speeds, surfaces of aerodromes, big sheds, cost of crashes. The big slow aero-

planes could get into an aerodrome that the ordinary fast scout merchant could get down into, but when they speeded them up, so that they could get from one place to another in a thirty-knot wind in a reasonable time, they took the most of a county to land in.

"Then there was the weather. They had the same troubles as the mail carriers and a few more. Pilots were paid to take risks, but passengers objected to being strewn over the countryside in a mixed lot of metal and matchwood. Fly on half-power plant? Not when fully loaded. Passengers didn't like to go above three thousand feet, it made some of them ill. Couldn't sleep after being up high. With heavy low clouds the aeroplanes had to go under them or over them. Below them, often at five hundred feet, it was too dangerous over land—chimneys and houses on hills; and they couldn't get down any place like we can at sea.

"The only run that would have paid was from London to Paris, joy-riders mostly, where you had to change from rail to boat and back to rail again. But the Channel Tunnel and the cut-throat competition between aeroplane companies left nothing in the bag.

"Yes, like the mail carriers, they did a bit better in places with decent climates, but the shareholders could never afford to travel by air on the dividends paid.

"Everybody all at once got wise to the fact that it was the long hauls over the water routes that were going to pay. Competitors, comparatively slow steamers, fifteen to twenty-five knots. One or two flying-boat companies had been working on the job and were not making such a bad fist at it. But the land machine people had a cut at it. Couldn't get it into their heads that big flying-boats were just as efficient as big land machines, and a bit faster, as they hadn't to carry landing wheels and under-carriage.

"What happened? They drowned a good many people, lost a lot of mails and machines, and gave it up after about two years of bitter experience. You see they were handicapped by having to land on aerodromes in mist and fog, and couldn't get up to the same speed as flying-boats.

"The airship people?

"They are not doing badly, but they're essentially fair-weather craft. I don't mean mist and fog, for they can hover with engines shut down, but wind.

"The two million cubic foot gas-bags produced in 1919—by the way, the Germans had 'em that size at the end of 1917—had only a top speed of sixty-seven knots when new. Head resistance and skin friction. Their cruising speed was something like forty-five knots. They found there was only about eighty days in the year they could cross the Atlantic with safety, and they had to go south-about through the anti-cyclonic weather. Their average time was three days, not much better than a

five-day surface boat. But they did carry on.

"They stuck to the job and built ten million cubic foot gas-bags—top speed eighty-three knots. They were really too slow for Transatlantic work. They were very costly, and as they carried big loads the companies had a hard time getting enough mails and passengers to pay for operating them. Safe enough, much safer than travelling by surface ships, but too dependent on the wind. Speed is what counts.

"In the meantime the big armament firms and steamship companies were sitting on the fence, watching the other fellows spending money and buying experience. They experimented a bit and gathered a lot of valuable data. One of the steamship companies had flying decks put on their liners, and when within three hundred miles of harbour launched mail-carrying aeroplanes. It cut down the time tremendously.

"Flying-boats?

"Not much was done with them. The Air Ministry was starved for money, and big boats were too costly for small firms to play with. Fortunately some bright blokes in the Navy had experiments carried out in their own yards. Somehow, even in the hardest of hard times after the Great War, the Navy managed to get money. I suppose they knew that trouble was coming.

"Remember the drawings of the fifty-ton flying-boat we looked at in 1919? Well, that was built, and proved more or less of a success. It was found that a boat of that size could be built of steel—so the steel merchants were got busy and finally succeeded in making two-hundred-ton steel, and eventually got to five-hundred. It was a costly business.

"There was really nothing screamingly successful until the ten thousand horse-power turbine came along. Janes Fluid made them possible for aircraft. Ordinary steam made from water is full of air, and that makes condensing difficult; air pumps and so on. Ammonia was tried a long time ago, and other true fluids, but the mechanical difficulties were too great. Then Janes struck on a true fluid that answered the purpose.

"And then came war.

"You don't want to hear about it? Well, we had a Labour Government, and the Army and the Air force became less than nothing, and the Navy was rather down at the heel, and the Empire was on the verge of breaking up. So a pushing Island People made a snatch at Australia and the islands in the Pacific. The League of Nations? That for practical purposes was the British Empire and America, and the enemy tackled both. Fortunately our Navy had about twenty ten-thousand horse-power flying-boats. I joined up at once, and saw the only fleet action.

"Remember the comic Russian with the aerial torpedo they were experimenting with in 1917? Right idea, but wrong principle. Wouldn't

work. The gunnery sharks took the idea, pulled it about, worried it, and produced the flying bomb. I believe Sperry tried it in 1915. They produced ton bombs with wings. Each boat carried two.

"We ran into the enemy in force. While the warships were piling on the heavy stuff we unloaded from ten thousand feet. The bombs glided a mile and a half for every thousand feet we were up. They were balanced by a gyroscope and steered by wireless. We nose-dived them into the lightly protected decks, and made rather a wreck of the enemy. What was left of him was bottled up in his ports.

"Then we went after them. We'd let go from twenty miles out, and the bombs would sail over boom and harbour defences. The surface ships had no chance. When we were finished you could have bought the Navies of the world for a song.

"The enemy was a stiff-necked and brave people, so we had to smash up a few of his coast towns before he surrendered. Aeroplanes? They hadn't got our speed, and if they had got at us we could have settled them with our one-inch quick-firers before they could have got close enough to get home. Anti-aircraft guns? We always unloaded too far away for them to touch us. You see, we didn't have to pass over the target.

"And that was what put flying-boats on their feet. The whole of the British Navy is now in the air. It's a fine sight to see a destroyer flotilla.

"The bigger the boats got, the faster they were. Scale effect. Stream-line 'em better and save weight in the hull. No trouble getting off or on, there's lots of water. Fog? No more dangerous to us than it is to surface ships. The Wireless Navigator tells us where we are to within a mile. And if the fog is very thick in a harbour, or the clouds are right down to the water, we land outside and taxi in, just as we used to do.

"Remember Queenie's night-landing gadget? It put a boat down on the water automatically. You let a lever hang down over the side, shut off your engines, glided down, and when the tip of the lever touched the water, it pulled back the controls, and the boat landed smoothly. We use an adaptation of the gadget to-day.

"Cost? You may be surprised to know that our two boats running the U.S. Mail just pay their way and no more—even with the Government subsidy. Our company runs smaller boats, ten thousand horse-power, down through the Mediterranean, to Australia, and in various places all over the world. They pay, but the big ones don't make money yet. They will in time.

"And now let us yarn about the old days."

So we yarned about Felixstowe, and the six-ton boats, and the pilots, until he had to

go to the control cockpit to relieve the First Mate.

"Like to come up before you turn in?" he asked.

We went up together. It was pitch dark outside. The control cockpit was lit only by the light in the binnacle and the Wireless Navigator.

"What happens about looking out from your glass-house when it rains or snows?" I asked.

"At our speed rain and snow won't stick to the streamlined glass," he replied. And then to the Quartermaster, a new man, for the first one had been relieved, "Put me through to the *Swallow*."

When the Quartermaster shut down a switch, he said, "Hullo, Morrison. Going strong. What's your position?"

A rich jovial voice at my elbow answered: "Good evening, Pank. Have you come for the ashes?" This was evidently some obscure joke, for the two Skippers laughed heartily together. And Pank asked: "How's the Missis and kids?" Then Morrison gave his position.

"That's our sister ship, eastbound," Pank said to me. "Keep a sharp look-out over our port bow and you'll see her lights. She'll pass in a moment."

I looked out into the darkness and caught a momentary glimpse of a bright white light and a red one. They were gone in a flash.

"That's her," said Pank.

I went below to my cabin and turned in. The next thing I remembered was a steward standing at my elbow with a cup of tea.

"Where are we now?" I asked.

"We'll land in twenty minutes," he replied.

I scrambled into my clothes and went up into the control cockpit, where I found Pank. The daylight was just beginning to creep over the water.

"On time to the minute," said the Skipper.

"There's the Statue of Liberty," I cried.

And then Pank: "Quartermaster, stand by. Engines, stand by. Engines, cut off."

We glided down towards the grey water silently and flattened out. I felt the great wings cushioning as we ran along above the surface. We touched. The sharp keel began to drag the speed down. There was the roar of a breaking bow wave. And then she settled in and stopped.

"Bowman, smart with the line," ordered Pank, as a motor-launch ran across our bows. We were in tow. "Unseal doors two, four, five, and six," he continued. The disks in the indicator were lifted.

Looking across the harbour I saw a mail-boat boiling towards us and an oiler standing by to pass us a filling hose when we were made fast to the buoy. Another motor-boat was on its way out to collect the passengers.

"I thought that crossing the Atlantic in a flying-boat was going to be an adventure," I said.

"Not at all," replied Pank. "It's a business."

EASTERN NIGHTS—AND FLIGHTS.

BY "CONTACT" (ALAN BOTT).

CHAPTER VII.—CUTHBERT, ALFONSO, AND A MUD VILLAGE.

If, at midnight, you were comfortably asleep in a railway carriage, and some Turkish guards dragged you out of it and led you along a puddled track to a mud village in the most God-forsaken part of Anatolia, while the skies rained their damnedest on you and your one spare shirt, you might be annoyed. Possibly you would cry, "To hell with the Turks!"

Such, at any rate, was H.'s comment, shouted at intervals every few seconds, while we watched the train move Constantinoplewards, leaving us at a small village called Alukeeshla.

Cuthbert and Alfonso (as we named the two soldiers who brought us from Bosanti) had told us we were going to Afion-Kara-Hissar. So we went to Alukeeshla. Being unable to read or write, they had failed to notice that the composite ticket given them for seven prisoners and two guards was valid only as far as this village. Their surprise was as great as ours when the conductor turned the whole party out of the train. Certainly, said he, while reading a paper produced by Cuthbert, we were bound for Afion-Kara-Hissar; but, according to these written instructions, there was to be an indefinite halt at Alukeeshla. It was typical of Turkish official methods—guards not knowing what must be done with the prisoners under their charge.

Cuthbert woke the sleepers, and began throwing luggage on to the platform. In his flurry he dropped a kit-bag on W.'s badly-wounded arm. The sight of W. in pain, following upon our many discomforts and annoyances, sent H. berserk. "To hell with the Turks!" he yelled, then stepped one pace backward, swung a long leg, and shot his size-eleven foot at Cuthbert. The kick lifted the greasy little guard from the floor, and sent him hurtling through the door of the compartment, outside of which he fell on all-fours.

Far from showing resentment, he was obviously cowed. Having picked himself up he asked us, humbly enough, to leave the train. Not wishing to make a bad situation worse by inviting violence, we complied, while trying to soothe H., who continued to consign all Turks to flaming perdition. Evidently Cuthbert and Alfonso thought they had to deal with a madman, and kept out of his way.

Nobody in Alukeeshla had heard of our existence, and no quarters, of course, had been allotted. The wretchedness of

our midnight search in a mud village for somewhere to rest was so complete as to be humorous; and as we trudged through the rain and the darkness, and fell into the deep puddles that filled every hole in the narrow badly-kept street, we laughed from sheer misery, so that the guards must have thought we were now all mad.

We disturbed the inmates of four hovels before finding the two-roomed building that served as gendarmerie headquarters. Clearly the policeman whom Cuthbert then roused from his sleep on the floor of the front room disliked us, and above all disliked going out into the night. After grumbling and protesting for five minutes, he lit a lantern, scowled his ugliest, and led the party through more puddles to a barn. With many a creak the door of it was unlocked by means of a rusty key.

Three sorry scarecrows rose up and blinked at the lantern, then sank down again resignedly. The atmosphere was indescribably musty and dusty. Revolting garbage of every species covered the earthen floor. The wooden walls were clotted with dirt. Something with wings could be heard flitting about, near the high roof. The three prostrate scarecrows were disgusting, not because of their rags and their filth, but because of their general suggestion of bestiality.

"The prison," announced the gendarme grandiloquently, as he waved his hand and moved towards the door.

Now Cuthbert and Alfonso shared our indignation at the dumping of British officers into such a place, for it would be their duty to stay with the said officers. They protested volubly; but the gendarme shrugged his shoulders, and said not a word as he half-opened the door. Thereupon H., still far from calm, grabbed his shoulder, spun him backward, and began explaining the situation in lurid Australian.

An inspiration was given me by the sight of W.'s bald head. W., although a second-lieutenant, was a very old man—in the neighbourhood of forty, I believe. He looked venerable enough to be a temperance lecturer, although as a matter of fact he was a first-rate fellow. Knowing the Turkish reverence for the higher military ranks, I pointed to the bald patch on his head and said, "*Kaimakam!*" (Colonel), then indicated the unpleasant surroundings, as if in protest against the indignity of putting a colonel in such a place.

The policeman, already in fear of H.'s violence, was obviously of opinion that a *kaimakam*, even an English one, should have better quarters. With a "*haidee git!*" to the guards, he led us back into the rain, and so to the gendarmerie. There he woke the police officer, and explained our presence. Fortunately the officer was too drowsy to read our papers for proof of the presence of a *kaimakam*. Finally, at his orders, the gendarme took us to a room on the first floor of a two-

storey mud building. It was dirty and utterly bare; but there, at any rate, we had privacy. We laid out claims to floor-space and fell asleep, while Alfonso remained on guard by the door.

That little room in a mud hut was the home for ten days of seven British officers and two Turkish guards. Side by side, and with bodies touching each other, there was just space enough for eight people to lie on the floor. Already, when we arrived, one could sense the presence of Cuthbert and Alfonso without seeing or hearing them; and with each washless day their natural odour became more and more intensive.

We had nothing to read, and—worst misfortune of all—somebody had left our pack of playing-cards in the train. We wandered round the walls like beasts in a cage.

Nobody in the village knew or cared why we were there, or what was to happen to us. We could only surmise that this was the punishment for the plot to escape from Damascus.

Cuthbert took our papers into the village on the morning after arrival, but returned at midday, with no information and many shoulder-shrugs. Although none of us knew Turkish, we understood enough to realise that if the matter of obtaining instructions were left to this stupid illiterate, we might stay in the village for ever.

A council of war decided that I, as being the linguist, and W., as being the most imposing of us, with his bald head, his bushy moustache, and his South African ribbons, should drag Cuthbert into the presence of whatever officials we could find, and make ourselves a pluperfect nuisance until we were sent away.

"Commandant!" I said, going towards the door, this word being common to most languages.

"*Yassak!*" (forbidden) said Cuthbert, barring the way.

"Commandant! Come!" I insisted, brushing him aside.

He was ready to yell for help, when Alfonso came forward as an unexpected ally, and persuaded Cuthbert that it would be better to let us try to clear up the situation. He led us to the station, where, with a French-speaking Armenian in tow as interpreter, we forced our way into the military commandant's office.

The commandant—a slight, dapper *bimbashi*—claimed to be desolated at our unfortunate position. But what could he do? he inquired. Only yesterday he had not heard of our existence, and then—clack!—we arrived without warning in this Anatolian village. Doubtless, if we waited a week or so, the authorities would send orders for a transfer to some prison camp. Meanwhile he would gladly help us in any way possible, except give us food or allow us to take walks or move us into a better house, or, in fact, do anything that I suggested. Twenty minutes of argument and bluster were necessary before W. and I could even induce the soft-spoken hypocrite to telegraph

to Bosanti for instructions about our disposal.

Next day, when I took Cuthbert to the station for news, no reply had come. Nor was there any message on the third morning. Ten o'clock of the morning became known as "commandant time," so that on the fourth day the guards took the visit as a matter of course, Cuthbert showing his watch by way of reminder. The *bimbashi*, worried by our importunities, took to dodging from his office when he saw us coming; but we always waited until he returned, and talked insistently until he promised to send yet another telegram. He showed surface politeness, and never uttered threats; which in any case would have been more or less futile, for the fighting force of the village comprised but one police lieutenant and four gendarmes.

We had arrived hungry, and we continued hungry. The law of supply and demand, as applied to eggs, together with the local brand of profiteer, was the cause. On the first morning a bearded peasant visited the hut with a basket of hard-boiled eggs, which he sold at the current rate of two and a half piastres each. Next day, when it became known in the village that the prisoners were buying eggs, the rate was four piastres each. Afterwards it leaped to five, and next to seven and a half piastres. Finally the supply of eggs all but gave out. It was then possible to buy only one apiece every morning; whereat we became more hungry than ever, for eggs were our mainstay.

The commandant had given reluctant permission for each prisoner to buy one small loaf of bread a day, at the military rate of two and a half piastres a loaf. For the rest, we managed to supplement the bread and eggs with an occasional supply of figs or raisins, bought in the village bazaar as I returned from my importuning of the military commandant.

These fruits were shown in open baskets on crazy little stalls, side by side with stale bread, bad sausages and meat, nuts, cotton materials, primitive haberdashery, rock-salt, rank butter, dusty milk, and the thousand and one other articles that jostle each other in the village bazaars of Anatolia. It being summer, myriads of flies buzzed around and settled on the dried fruits. The figs and raisins, therefore, could not be eaten unless washed carefully or boiled. Fortunately we had a good cooking-pot, given by the Tommies at Bosanti; and a ruffian who lived below sold us charcoal, at the rate of ten piastres for a quantity just sufficient to burn for half an hour.

At its best, the crowded room was so stuffy as to be oppressive. When charcoal fumes were added to the summer closeness the atmosphere became unbearable. Another drawback that prevented much cooking was the scarcity of water. We were given just enough to drink; but any surplus, for washing or boiling

purposes, had to be bought. Usually one bottle of water sufficed for the morning toilet of two of us. Cuthbert and Alfonso remained unworried by the shortage. They never washed.

Nerve-edging irritation will ever link itself to an enforced companionship from which there is no escape, however temporary; and when repulsive surroundings are the milieu such irritation is akin to madness. The reek, the vermin, the heat, the hunger, the confined space, the dirt and the depression, combined to stab our sensibilities, so that by the third day we almost hated each other, individually and collectively.

We could obtain no brush, no soap, no broom. The little den grew dirtier and dirtier, the floor became more and more littered, the guards were smellier and smellier. Cramped and intensely ennuied, we paced in criss-cross fashion around the twelve square yards of floor-space, getting in each other's way and brooding bitterly. Of outdoor exercise there was only the daily visit to the commandant; and but one other man was allowed to walk to the station with me each morning.

A word, a suggestion, or a nudge was enough to provoke loud disputes. Every now and then heated words only stopped short of blows, because all realised that the anger had been sired, not by bad feeling, but by disgusting circumstances, and that a fight would be utterly futile. Worst of all, as most prisoners in Turkey must have realised, was the galling subjection to men such as Cuthbert and Alfonso—semi-civilised, altogether unintelligent, and regulating their actions by the crudest of instincts and axioms.

Only one of us—old W.—remained reasonable; and he would have had the greatest cause for irritation. His wounded arm, which had not received proper treatment in the Turkish hospital at Nazareth, became badly inflamed as a result of the terrible conditions. Yet he never once complained, nor did he take part in the constant quarrels. Looking back, I can realise that his fine example was the sole redeeming feature of those miserable days in the mud village.

On one point only did we all agree. "Wish some of the pretty boys who sport their tabs in Cairo could be here," said H.; and there followed a chorus of hearty assent.

"How about 'X.'?" he continued, mentioning the name of one of the rudest staff officers who ever sat in a swivel chair. The five aviators among us grinned at the thought of having him to ourselves in the tiny room, far away from the list of postings and from Regulations Governing the Promotion of Officers. This happy thought almost reconciled us to the discomfort.

Always it rained. How it rained! The yard below our window was oozy with mud, so that the veiled women who were our neighbours lifted their robes high as they buried their thick ankles into the slush.

Three of them, with an old man, a boy, and three infants, lived in a two-roomed hovel that faced our building. Other dwellers in their hut were a donkey, a dog, and several hens. Two of the women took ostentatious care to draw their *yashmaks* closer whenever a prisoner showed himself at the window; but the third, rather less unprepossessing than the others, was not so careful to protect her face from the gaze of infidels. Beyond the yard was a stretch of flat mud, dotted with squat ugly buildings.

It was an Australian—I forget which one—who discovered by accident an antidote for the state of unutterable boredom and depression which was overwhelming us. He had lived in the district which for a time was the hunting-ground of the Kelly gang, and he retold the vivid melodrama, as told to him by older people who had been spectators, of the bush-ranger brothers who wore armour and robbed so successfully, daringly, and incredibly. By the time we had listened, thrilled by wonder, to the tale of the Kellys' last great stand against a large force of police, with a burning house as background, what would have been another miserable evening had passed in tense interest.

Afterwards we made full use of this means to forgetfulness. Each afternoon and evening somebody delivered himself of *choses vues* or *choses entendues*. H. told of his wanderings in Fiji, R. of sheep-farming in Queensland, I was able to relate a few early-war observations on the Swiss-German frontier in connection with German espionage. Old W. possessed both the Queen's and King's South African decorations, and for many years after the war in which he gained them had served in the Cape Mounted Rifles. His yarns of diamond-field days before Kimberley was made respectable by the De Beers monopoly, of Mafeking and the Vaal, of the Boer tribal treks and of early Rhodesia, would fill worthily many a page of 'Blackwood,' even as they filled many an empty hour in the hut at Alukeeshla.

When pre-1914 reminiscences ran dry, most phases of the war were described from personal experience. M. and H. had fought on Gallipoli as troopers; R. had flown in the Sinai Desert campaign; W. was at Ypres and Neuve Chapelle in 1915; I had flown over the Somme battles in the days before the Royal Flying Corps had been provided with machines designed for warfare, instead of for inherent stability coupled with inherent unsuitability for fighting Fokkers, Halberstadts, and Rolands on equal terms.

Even Alfonso contributed to the time-killing narratives. We were discussing the war's origin, and somebody mentioned Sarajevo. "Ya, Sarajevo!" he said, pointing to his chest, then plunged into a whirlpool of unintelligible talk. He knew a few German words, but mostly he spoke in Turkish or in what was either Serbian or some Bosnian dialect. I failed to

gather whether he said he was a native of Bosnia or had merely lived there. It was clear, however, that he had been at Sarajevo when the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was murdered, and seen the deed. Alfonso's excited description, containing here and there a word I could understand, reminded me, incongruously enough, of Marinetti's Futurist "verse," which I had heard recited by the poet himself at a London night club in 1913. Said Alfonso:—

"Kronprinz—jabber jabber jabber—Sarajevo—
Jabber jabber jabber — automobil—
Jabber*—Pouf! pouf! pouf! pouf! pouf! pouf!—
Kronprinz automobil halt boum!—
Jabber jabber jabber—Kronprinz aa-ee—
Damen aa-ee! aa-ee!—jabber jabber—aa-ee!
Jabber jabber jabber jabber jabber jabber."

* Lifting his arm as if aiming with a revolver.

We passed a vote of thanks to Alfonso, together with a cigarette and a fig.

The departure from the mud village was as absurd as the rest of our experiences in it. On my ninth visit to him the commandant announced with pride that he had arranged for us to leave by the evening train, and that the station-master at Bosanti would leave an empty truck for us.

Twenty minutes before the train arrived we trudged through the rain to the station, carrying our parcels of disreputable kit. All three gates leading to the platform were guarded by sentries, who offered to bayonet any who tried to pass without papers stamped by the local gendarmerie. To each sentry in turn Cuthbert explained frantically who we were, and what the commandant had said, only to be met with an invariable "*Yassak!*" and a fingering of the rifle.

The *bimbashi* himself was absent, and so was the Armenian interpreter—the only other person, apparently, who knew our orders. Alfonso, despatched to the commandant's house, returned with the news that he could not be found. We stood in the rain, puffing at damp cigarettes and cursing. H. returned to his old refrain, "To hell with the Turks!"—to the great wonder of the tatterdemalion men and boys gathered round us.

When the train steamed away from Alukeeshla, taking, no doubt, the empty truck reserved for us, we startled the guards and sentries with yells of uncontrollable laughter.

M. and I opened next morning's visit to the *bimbashi* with bitter protests, but had to end it in helpless acquiescence before his suave lies. He had given strict orders that the sentries were to let us pass, he pretended, and they would be punished severely for their failure to do so. Meanwhile, he was charmed that we were to accept the hospitality of the village for one day longer. He himself would be present to see us off by the next train that same evening.

For once in a while the commandant kept his promise. He led us to the station himself

But this time no accommodation had been provided for us on the train. The trucks were full of Germans, the first and second-class carriages of Turkish officers, the third-class carriages of Turkish soldiers. As it would be difficult to crowd the Turkish officers, and impossible to dislodge any Germans, the only alternative was to clear out some of the Turkish privates.

The *bimbashi* selected a carriage, entered it, and ordered its occupants to descend to the platform. There were only nine of us, with the guards, while the soldiers numbered more than forty. Yet the *bimbashi* turned them all out. He hurled their packs through the open windows, and by candlelight drove them before him to the doorway. Some, who were reluctant to leave, he struck. It was astonishing to see the little man smacking and kicking burly brutes twice his size; though he knew well that they would never dare to hit back.

When the carriage was quite empty he took us inside and placed us in a corner. The Turkish rabble, swearing and grumbling, then returned with their packs and their rifles, and scowled at us as they packed themselves into the remaining seats. The whole matter could have been arranged, with a twentieth of the fuss, by merely moving nine Turks from one end of the carriage to the other.

"Good?" asked the commandant proudly, after we were seated.

"Magnificent!" I replied, while we tried hard not to let our self-control be blown over by gusts of laughter.

"Then *au revoir*, my friend."

"Adieu, mister the commandant."

He strutted down the platform; and we passed from Alukeeshla to whatever weird experiences might be waiting for us elsewhere.

. . . . . .

This chapter is but an amplification of an inscription signed by H. and myself before we left our mud home. When passing towards Alukeeshla from the station, take the second turning to the right beyond the gendarmerie, then the first to the left, and pick out the fifth house in a row of buildings that stare at you from the bottom of a blind alley. Enter it and climb some rickety stairs to the back room on the first floor, overlooking a yard, and you may still find these words on one of the walls—

"In memory of some bad days and good yarns, spent and told in this dirty room of this verminous hut in this Godforsaken village. To hell with the Turks!"

CHAPTER VIII.—IN THE SHADOW OF THE BLACK ROCK.

Moored under a willow-tree, we were clearing what was left of the cold chicken and salad from the middle of a punt. I filled the Chambertin bottle with water and dropped it

overboard. It plashed, and sank noiselessly to the bottom of the Thames. From beyond the island came the metallic strains of a gramophone, made less blatant by the soft atmosphere of the river. A passing punt-pole clacked, rose from the surface, stabbed the water and clacked again. Flies danced from the hot sunlight into the shade of the willow, and hovered over the remains of our lunch. I composed the cushions and lay down, opposite Phyllis.

But the cushions became harder and harder, and the breeze merged gradually into a stuffy dank oppressiveness. I opened my eyes and sat up. The head-cushion, it appeared, was a sackful of kit, my white flannels were a uniform in creased and dirtied khaki. Phyllis was Alfonso the Turkish guard, and the Thames the military baths at Afion-Kara-Hissar, in the centre of Anatolia.

Some naked Turks arrived through the stone passage that led to the hot room, and began undressing. Cuthbert was talking to the bath attendant, while Alfonso lay opposite me and snored. H. and W. also snored, in dissonant notes. R. was sorting out his kit. The rest of the party still slumbered silently, stretched out in twisted attitudes on the stone floor.

Then I remembered how that we were dragged from the train in the early hours of the morning, and had wandered through the streets of Afion-Kara-Hissar, looking for the prison camp. Finding it closed to night arrivals, Cuthbert and Alfonso led us to the Madrissah *hammam*, in the courtyard of a mosque. Weary with want of sleep and the hardships of a long journey, we had slept for several hours on the floor of the outer bathroom.

Only R. risked taking off his boots; and these had evidently disappeared, for as he searched his loud curses echoed from the domed roof. As was to be expected, all the Turks in the room disclaimed volubly any knowledge of the missing boots, so that when we moved to the prisoners' camp R. clattered along the streets in a pair of wooden sandals, borrowed from the bath attendant.

A Turkish officer took charge of us at the barrier which divided the street of prison-houses from the rest of the town. Soon afterwards Cuthbert and Alfonso waved a good-humoured farewell and disappeared. With them they took our cooking pots, although we failed to discover this fact until later in the day. By that time they had left Afion-Kara-Hissar. We swore long and loud at the memory of the two guards, for in those days any sort of a cooking utensil was in Turkey worth at least two pounds.

Passing up the narrow street we were greeted by groups of weirdly-clothed Britishers. Some wore torn and creased uniforms, with a civilian cap or a much-dented billycock; some combined military hat with ill-fitting suits of shoddy mufti; some were in khaki shorts, surmounted by shirts of violent colours, open at the

neck; some were heavy boots, some were bedroom slippers, some were sandals. If the costumes resembled anything at all, it was the illustrations of Murger's 'Vie de Bohême.'

Many of these prisoners were survivors of the Kut-el-Amara garrison, and had been prisoners in Turkey for two and a half years. Their uniforms had long since become scarecrow relics of better days, since when they had depended for clothing on the supplies forwarded by the Dutch Legation at Constantinople. The productions of the Turkish tailors and shirtmakers, as issued to the prisoners at Afion, were entertaining but anarchic.

Afion-Kara-Hissar contained the largest prison-camp in Turkey, although there were others at Yozgad, Broussa, and Geddos, the last named being for the fifty or sixty of His Majesty's officers who had been persuaded to give parole not to attempt an escape. When the first batch of British officers arrived at Afion, the Turks turned some Armenian families out of their homes, confiscated the furniture, and told the captives from the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia that they were to live in the empty houses.

"Beds? Furniture?" said the commandant. "We have none, and it is impossible to supply any."

"Food?" he said in reply to another demand; "it is well known that all British officers are rich. You have money enough to buy food for yourselves."

And so it had to be. At first the British officers lived on their pay as captives; which, according to rank, was at the rate of seven to ten Turkish pounds a month. But food prices soon expanded to extraordinary proportions, while the exchange value of the Turkish pound continued to decrease. By the beginning of 1918 it was worth less than ten shillings; while sugar, for example, was fifteen shillings a pound. Tea was ten pounds sterling a pound, and real coffee was unobtainable. Under these conditions it became almost impossible to obtain even a bare subsistence on seven Turkish pounds a month without outside help. The Dutch Legation, therefore, supplemented each captive officer's pay to the extent of first five, then fifteen Turkish pounds a month, taken from the Red Cross funds at its disposal.

Even thus the food difficulties could not have been solved without the help of parcels from home. These arrived either seven or eight months after they left England, or never. Many were delivered only after the Turks had looted the scarcest articles, such as boots, clothes, and good tobacco. Letters from England needed from two to five months for transit.

The lack of furniture was overcome by amateur carpentry. With string, nails, and planks of wood, each newly-arrived prisoner constructed a bed, a table, and a chair. Profiteers in the bazaar naturally took advantage of the demand for wood, and by the

time of which I write the price of it had soared to two Turkish pounds a plank.

Besides the officers there were at Afion about two hundred Tommies, shut up in a Greek church. Their daily rations from the Turks were one small loaf of bad bread and one basin of thin soup. For the rest they existed on the tinned food which they received from time to time in parcels. As for the Russian soldiers who were herded into the Madrissah buildings, they were literally starving, and most of them had sold part of their clothing to buy extra food. Weak and ragged, they passed the time in walking round and round the courtyard. During the bitter months of winter scores of them died from hunger and cold.

Conditions in the prison camps varied according to the character of whomever happened to be the Turkish commandant. For a time the officer in charge was one Muslum Bey, who was reported to have committed several "executions" for Enver Pasha during the turbulent days of the Young Turk *coup d'état* in 1908. He was a brute, a swindler, and a degenerate, and during his reign unspeakable outrages were committed. He himself gave a Russian officer who had committed some minor offence more than a hundred strokes of the bastinado. When his arm was tired he made his sergeant-major continue the flogging, until the Russian fainted. The victim's unconscious body was then thrown into a cellar, where a part of his face was burned by contact with quicklime.

Muslum Bey not only stole food parcels from England, but made a practice of deducting part of the monthly pay that helped to procure for the British Tommies a bare existence. In addition, he made an arrangement with bazaar traders whereby a monopoly in certain articles of food came into being, and the prisoners had to pay incredible prices, or go hungry.

It was not until the visit of a Swiss Commission, investigating the prison-camps of Turkey, that the British officers at Afion-Kara-Hissar heard of Muslum Bey's worst outrage. The brutal commandant had taken great care that there should be no communication between the captive officers and the captive men, and severe punishment was inflicted if a Tommy tried to speak with a British officer in the street. Scenting something wrong, the officers persuaded members of the Swiss Commission to take with them the senior British doctor when they visited the Tommies in the Greek church. Almost the first words that Colonel B., the doctor in question, heard on entering the building were the equivalent of "I've been violated, sir." He then learned the story of how two British soldiers, thrown into jail for some trivial offence, had been held down by Turkish guards and outraged, first by the commandant and then by his sergeant-major.

The Swiss Commission itself was not immune. An Australian officer took a member of it aside and told him the full story of the awful death-march from Kut-el-Amara, in which the captured garrison, already reduced by hunger, were forced to trek over 800 miles of desert and mountain, being left to die in the scorching sun if they fell out owing to weakness—a death-march which is responsible for the fact that less than 25 per cent of the men captured at Kut-el-Amara are alive to-day.

"Yes, we know all about it," said the Swiss, "and we had it in our notes. But most of our papers were stolen the other day."

When I reached Afion, in May 1918, the conditions had improved. As a result of a secret report by the senior British officer, smuggled to the headquarters at Constantinople of the Ottoman Red Crescent, Muslum Bey had been removed from his position and imprisoned. He was put on trial for his many crimes; but owing to *baksheesh* and to political protection the sentence was but a few months' imprisonment. He had already served this period while awaiting trial, and was therefore released immediately after sentence. He went into business as a shopkeeper, and sold, among other things, tinned food bearing British labels—tinned food of the kind that anxious people in England and India lovingly bought and lovingly packed for their husbands, sons, and relatives who were prisoners of war.

Meanwhile, although Muslum Bey had been given only the travesty of a punishment by the Turkish judges, instructions were sent from the Turkish War Office that life at the prison-camps of Afion-Kara-Hissar must be made more pleasant. We were, for example, allowed the run of a portion of the hillside. In cold print such a concession seems unimportant enough; but to men who had become staled and unspeakably bored by months of captivity during which their only exercise was to walk up and down a narrow street, it was a godsend. Cricket and football matches were also allowed, and two or three times a week long walks were arranged.

Members of these walking parties would study the flat plain that surrounded Afion-Kara-Hissar and the succession of hill-ranges beyond it, and dream of an escape to some point on the coast.

From this town in the centre of Anatolia, however, escape seemed an impossibility. The nearest point of the coast was 150 miles distant; and the intervening country, much of it wild and almost trackless, was full of brigands and starving outlaws of every description, who would cheerfully kill a chance traveller for a pair of boots, a loaf of bread, or merely for practice. In any case a tramp to the coast must extend over at least five weeks, and it was difficult to see how food for this long period could be carried.

Several officers carried on a

secret correspondence with friends in England by means of code, and tried to prepare schemes whereby a boat was to be waiting for them at some specified part of the coast-line between specified dates, or whereby an aeroplane was to pick them up during the night. Most of us gave up the idea of making a dash for freedom from Afion, and schemed to be sent to Constantinople, where the chances of success would be greater.

When a recently-captured prisoner first accepted the fact that escape from Afion-Kara-Hissar was impossible, and when the monotony of captivity had permeated him, he would as a rule pass through a period of melancholia and the deepest depression. A black rock—huge, gaunt, and forbidding—overshadowed the little town from its height of 2000 feet of almost sheer precipice. For hours at a time one would stare at its bare blackness, and at the crumbling ruins of the fortress, built by the Seljak Turks, which topped the rock; and the blackness and bareness would enter into one's soul and plunge one into a swirling vortex of morbid thoughts. For me the rock was a symbol of captivity—bleak, inexorable, and unrelenting.

Yet as a rule the period of melancholia soon passed, and gave place to resigned acceptance of the trivial and monotonous daily round of prison life. This view of things was made possible by improvised distractions, by reading, and by the discussion of the thousand and one rumours that spread from the bazaars. Time and again it would be whispered by some Greek trader that Talaat Pasha was negotiating a separate peace and had agreed to open the Dardanelles, or that war was about to be declared between Turkey and Bulgaria as a result of the Dobrudja dispute, or that Enver Pasha had been assassinated, or that the Sultan was determined to rid himself of the Young Turk government. We knew well that these reports were untrue and scarce worth even the attention of bitter laughter; but, since we wanted them to be true, they would be discussed with gravity over the mess-tables, until the next batch of newspapers proved their falsity.

The most useful means to forgetfulness was the camp library. Many hundreds of books were sent to the prison-camps of Turkey by various societies and individual sympathisers in England—in particular, I believe, through the good offices of Lady Victoria Herbert. In case this chapter should meet the notice of any of these our benefactors, I wish to put on record their great help in making bearable the dark days of thousands of prisoners. It was at Afion-Kara-Hissar that I first found the courage and concentration necessary to read through each and every consecutive volume of Gibbon. 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' by the way, was probably

more in demand than anything else in the library; for the state of mind induced by captivity needed something more solid and satisfying than the best yeller-seller. Great favourites, too, were books of Eastern travel and adventure —in particular the works of Burton and Lamartine, the 'Travels of Marco Polo the Venetian,' and Morier's 'Hajji Baba.' A copy of Plutarch's 'Lives' also received the attention of much wear and tear. For the rest, many a time have I thanked the gods for Kipling; but never more heartily than when lying on the hillside at Afion and forgetting the Black Rock and all that it stood for in the company of Kim the lovable, Lalun the lovely, and The Man Who Would Be King.

Away from the ragtime blare and rush of modern life this isolation in a small town of a semi-civilised province gave the prisoners time and opportunity to "find" themselves, so that for the first time in their lives many began to think individually instead of accepting conventional opinions at second hand. At least one book of promise was written at Afion-Kara-Hissar, and four others have found publication. Several excellent poems were born there, amid a welter of verse that was deathless because lifeless. Plays, paintings, and songs were produced in profusion. One man, an Australian, made a very thorough study of the ancient civilisations of the Middle East, and could supply accurate information, without reference to a book, about every phase of the rise and fall of Babylon and Nineveh, of the Medes and Persians, of the Chaldeans and Assyrians, with the extent and location and customs and conquests of the various empires. Yet he confessed that three years earlier, at a time when he was flying in Mesopotamia, he had no more interest in Babylon than in Nashville, Tennessee.

Apart, however, from the quality of this work *pour passer le temps*, the very fact that so many should adventure into the country of creative effort proved that, when away from the preoccupations of an artificial social system, even the average Englishman turned instinctively to learning and the arts.

Meanwhile many a lively performance was given in the garden which served as open-air theatre, with plays written and songs composed by people who, before being subjected to the isolation of captivity, had occupied themselves solely with soldiering or business. Comic relief was provided by two youthful subalterns who set up shop as earnest-minded philosophers, and on a foundation of Nietzsche, Wilde and Shaw built a gargoyled edifice that was perverted and extravagantly young, but withal vastly entertaining.

The social life of the camp was complex. Despite the absence of the female of the species, it resembled in many ways that of a suburb in some

wealthy city of the Midlands. As was to be expected among a hundred people confined in two small streets, innumerable cliques were formed, from each of which ripples of gossip spread outward until they merged into and were overwhelmed by another ripple of gossip. Starting in the morning from a small room in a wooden house, an item of scandal would by the evening have reached every room of thirty other houses—how that X. had received a pair of pyjamas for nothing from the Red Cross supply and sold them for three liras; how that Y. had climbed over several roofs at night-time and, in the shadow of a chimney, met that Armenian girl with the large eyes; how that Z. had experimented with opium-smoking. Opium, by the way, could be had in plenty. The production of it was the chief industry of Afion-Kara-Hissar (*afion* is Turkish for "poppy," *kara hissar* being "black rock"). Enormous poppy-fields surrounded the town in vivid splashes of red and white.

Yet with all the trivial gossip and light scandal there was a very real sense of comradeship. If any man were sick, the remainder would fall over each other in their desire to be of help. If any house were short of wood during the bitter months of winter, its inmates could always borrow from such as had enough and to spare. A new prisoner, possessing no money and a minimum of clothes—as was the case with most of us—would find himself overwhelmed by loans and gifts.

When I was at Afion the camp was very much preoccupied with rumours of a forthcoming exchange of sick prisoners between Great Britain and Turkey. Scores of intrigues centred round the room of Major H., then senior medical officer among the British; for it would be his task to examine the "unfit" before deciding which were to be sent for further and final examinations by Turkish medical boards. Scarcely a man failed to produce some ailment. Wounds that had healed years before were bandaged and treated with unnecessary care. Limps of every description might be seen in the street. Some claimed to be deaf. Others allowed their grey hairs to grow long, and continued to express an opinion that the old and feeble should be sent home first. Such as could produce neither old age nor some physical ailment discussed loss of memory and mental trouble.

All day long Major H. examined the claimants, smiled to himself, and compiled lists. These, I imagine, must have been subdivided something like this: (*a*) Those who suffered from real injuries or illnesses; (*b*) those who were middle-aged and had minor ailments; (*c*) those who were young and had minor ailments; (*d*) those who might conceivably have minor ailments but could supply no visible symptoms; (*e*) those who had nothing the

matter with them, but were good liars, and as such might convince the Turks; (*f*) those who were not only healthy, but unconvincing liars.

Besides the British there were at Afion about a hundred Russian officers; for although the peace of Brest-Litovsk had been signed and Russia was at peace with Germany, the Russian was the traditional enemy of the Turk, and none knew when war might break out between Turkey and the small States which had sprung up in the Caucasus. With no money, no Red Cross supplies, no means of communicating with their relatives, and no knowledge of whether these relatives had survived the Bolshevik terror, the Russian officers among us lived miserably, and depended largely upon the charity of British fellow-captives. In return they taught us a smattering of Russian, and helped to pass the time with their interminable but entertaining talk. They also provided a really fine choir, with Captain Korniloff, a cousin of the famous general of that name, as one of its leading members. Besides ourselves, its audience, when it sang on the hillside, never failed to include the dark-haired Armenian girls—the only Armenians left in the town—who had been spared from the exodus and massacres of 1915-1916 that they might serve the pleasures of Turkish officers and officials. They listened from a distance, and looked their sympathy, as we looked ours.

At the beginning of each month, when the Red Cross funds arrived from Constantinople, there would be a succession of birthday parties. On these occasions the rule was relaxed whereby each prisoner must remain in his own house after seven o'clock. The Turks reverence birthdays, and by playing upon this fact permission would be obtained to celebrate in a friend's room. It was necessary to claim birthdays in rotation, for even the Turks might have disbelieved if the same prisoner had three of them in three successive months.

I shall always remember a party given on the evening of my arrival by White, an Australian aviator captured in the early days of the Mesopotamian campaign. It was my first introduction to *árak*, a kind of a tenth-rate absinthe, which, except some incredibly bad brandy, was then the only alcoholic stimulant to be bought in Anatolia. Finding it stronger than it seemed, I had almost forgotten captivity in an unreal enjoyment of the songs, the stories, and the general hilarity—a hilarity which was merely a cloak for forgetfulness. And then, amid the fumes and the shouting, there recurred insistently the thought of escape. I spoke of it to the man nearest me, a short figure in a faded military overcoat, Turkish slippers, and an eyeglass.

"Not so loud," he warned. "You can't trust half these Russians. Come over into the corner."

Yeats-Brown, the speaker, began to suggest advice about how best to escape. One's only

chance, he declared, was to get to Constantinople. He himself claimed nose trouble, and having cultivated the friendship of the local Turkish doctor, he was to be sent for treatment to a hospital in the capital. If I could invent some plausible ailment he would persuade the Turkish doctor to use his influence on my behalf. Meanwhile we would have further talks and discuss plans. The great thing was to get to Constantinople.

Although I did not know it at the time, there were in that bare room several men with whom, in a few weeks' time, I was to be involved in a succession of extraordinary intrigues and adventures, when we should have met again in Constantinople. There was the host himself—Captain White—who later on joined me in a thousand-mile journey, through Russia and Bulgaria, to freedom; there was Captain Yeats-Brown, who for weeks went about an enemy capital disguised as a girl; there was Paul, who was to escape three times, be recaptured twice, and finally to marry the English lady who helped him; there was Prince Constantine Avaleff, a Russian colonel, who was to help us all by acting as go-between; there was Lieutenant Vladimir Wilkowsky, a Polish aviator, whom I was to see again on the other side of the Black Sea, in German-occupied Odessa. Meanwhile the *árak* bottle passed round, and the songs grew louder and wilder, until daylight broke up the party and we returned to our rough hand-made beds.

It now became my aim in life to reach Constantinople. My injuries had healed, and at a moment's notice I could produce no convincing illness. I decided, therefore, on some form of mental trouble. Yeats-Brown had already mentioned me to his friend the Turkish doctor, and I was to have been examined, when yet again the unexpected happened. It was ordered by the Ministry of War that the seven of us who left Damascus together should be forwarded to Constantinople, presumably for interrogation.

I took with me high hopes and the addresses of various civilians in the capital who might be of help. As we entrained, and moved westward through the poppy-fields, the Black Rock—which more than ever seemed a symbol of the blackness and menace that overshadowed prisoners in this half-barbaric country—loomed gigantic and forbidding, so that I was thankful when the railway wound round a hill and shut it from sight. I vowed to myself that never again would I return to the monotonous death-in-life of the prison-camp at its foot, on the fringe of the squalid town of Afion-Kara-Hissar.

CHAPTER IX.—CONSTANTINOPLE; AND HOW TO BECOME MAD.

"Your best card," said Pappas Effendi, "is *vertige*. Melancholia and loss of memory and nervous break-

down and all that'll be helpful, but play up *vertige* for all you're worth. It can mean anything. Besides, it's impressive."

Pappas Effendi was a Roman Catholic chaplain, waiting at Psamatia (a suburb of Constantinople) to be exchanged as a sick prisoner of war. He and I were discussing how best I could be admitted to hospital, so as to remain in the capital. My injuries had healed, and I could conjure up no physical disorder at a moment's notice. I decided to claim, therefore, that as a result of the aeroplane crash in Palestine I suffered from nervous and mental troubles.

For the few British officers at Psamatia the accommodation was fair to very fair; but for the soldiers of many nationalities in the same camp, life must have been dreadful. Hundreds of them—Britishers, Indians, Russians, Roumanians, and Serbs—were herded together into filthy, crowded outhouses and sheds. They were allowed outside them only twice a day, when they walked backwards and forwards, forwards and backwards across the yard, by way of exercise. Most of them had done nothing else for months. Their daily rations were the usual loaf of bread and basin of unnourishing soup.

For the Britishers and Indians conditions were not so bad, because they received occasional food parcels from home, and a small monthly remittance from the Red Cross. The Russians, Roumanians, and Serbs had neither money nor parcels. Some died of weakness, some sold half their clothing to buy food, and in consequence died of cold during the bitter winters. The Tommies were also better off in that they were supplied with clothes and boots by the Dutch Legation, which administered the Red Cross funds. Prisoners of other nationalities walked about gaunt and in tatters. The British gave them whatever food and tobacco could be spared on parcel-days, but even so they could often be seen scrambling for a thrown-away stump of cigarette, or for bits of bread or biscuit. Many seemed almost bestial in their hopeless misery. Only the Serbs, stoic as always, maintained a reserved dignity and scorned to beg.

Two or three times a week we were allowed into Stamboul, in parties of two or three, each with a guard. On such days the usual rendezvous for lunch was a little restaurant near the bridge across the Golden Horn. To pass over the bridge across the Golden Horn was forbidden; for Pera, the European quarter, was pro-Ally almost to a man, and a British prisoner might find many helpers there. Even in the pre-eminently Turkish Stamboul one often happened upon sympathisers. There was a young Armenian who, whenever he could, talked politics to us on the little suburban railway between Stamboul and Psamatia, and told us the latest false report of an imminent peace.

"Nous sommes tous des Anglophiles acharnés," he assured F. and me.

The threatened interrogation never happened, and one evening it was announced that our party of seven were to return to Afion-Kara-Hissar. From every point of view it would be advisable to remain in Constantinople. I believed it to be the only Turkish town in which one might arrange a successful escape, and I knew that it contained civilians who were either British themselves or willing to help British prisoners. Moreover, it offered infinite possibilities in the way of distraction, which were always attainable through *baksheesh*, that lowest common denominator of the Turkish Empire. And if the long-promised exchange of sick prisoners took place, Constantinople was obviously the place where strings must be pulled if one wanted to be sent home on the strength of some feigned illness.

There were at Psamatia two officers who had been told that they would be among the first batch of prisoners to leave the country. One of them—Flight-Lieutenant F., captured after losing his way during his first night-raid on active service—claimed to be suffering from some form of tuberculosis, difficult of definition and detection but strongly supported by influential friends. The other was Father M., a Roman Catholic padre who was among the captured garrison of Kut-el-Amara. It was evident that thirty months of captivity had seriously affected his wellbeing, mental and physical. In any case, as a non-combatant well over military age, the white-haired priest should most certainly have been allowed to leave Turkey. Meanwhile he was well loved by all at Psamatia, even by the guards, who knew him as "Pappas Effendi." Whenever he passed down the street children from among the Catholic Christians who lived near the prison-house would stand in his way and demand a blessing.

Unfortunately there was in the camp library no medical text-book to tell how a prisoner might feign nervous disorders. I had to be content with coaching from Pappas Effendi, and with practising before the mirror a doleful look, tempered by a variety of twitchings. Then I visited the camp doctor. Ever since my aeroplane smash, I complained with mournful insistence, I had suffered terribly from *vertige*, from periods of utter forgetfulness, from maddening melancholia, and from nervous outbreaks. Above all from *vertige*.

Fortunately the doctor, like most Turkish medical men, was both ignorant and lazy. His day's work was to sit in an office for two hours, always smoking a cigarette through an absurdly long holder, and having listened to the translated statements of would-be patients, either to send them away with a pill or to write out a form whereby they could be examined at a hospital. A wound or an injury he might have treated by pill; but it was plain that the very suggestion of mental trouble stumped him. He could not withstand the word *vertige*,

and after a second repetition of it I had no difficulty in procuring a chit ordering me to be dealt with by a hospital doctor.

That same afternoon I was led to Gumuch Souyou Hospital, in Pera. There my claims to admission as a mentally afflicted person were granted without question, so that I began to wonder whether or not I really was in my right mind. Having heard the list of pretended symptoms, not forgetting the *vertige*, an Armenian doctor sent me to bed for a fortnight's rest.

W., whose wounded arm was badly inflamed, already occupied a bed in the same room, as did Ms., who years before had ricked his right knee and, by reason of its weakness, managed to stay in hospital, with one eye on the possibilities of an exchange of prisoners. R., who had the same object in view, turned up from Psamatia later in the day. He had shown two perfectly-healed bullet wounds in the leg, received three years earlier in Gallipoli, and bluffed the Turkish doctor into believing that they were giving him renewed trouble.

Now clearly, if I wished to maintain a reputation for melancholia, nervous fits, and *vertige*, I should have to prove abnormality; and just as clearly it would be difficult to give convincing performances before fellow-prisoners who knew me to be normal. The only solution was to demand removal to a single-bedded room, for the sake of quiet.

"Pulse and heat normal," commented the ward doctor next morning. Pulses, hearts, and doctors are often unaccommodating.

"Yes, M. le docteur. For the moment nothing worries me, except that I have forgotten all that has happened since the aeroplane smash. Sometimes my mind is a black blank, sometimes I am unconscious of what I do, sometimes the *vertige* is so bad that I cannot stand on my feet. Above all, I hate being near anybody. I desire complete rest. Will you be so kind as to let me go to a small room where I can remain alone?"

The doctor was only half-convinced; but he gave instructions for the change, while W. turned over suddenly to hide his face, and covered his head with a blanket so as not to laugh out loud.

Once again, as I lay in bed and racked my common-sense for ideas on the subject of nervous fits and *vertige*, I deplored the lack of any kind of medical text-book; for never before had I suffered from mental derangement.

"Pulse and heart normal," the doctor said inexorably on the following morning.

Then, some hours later, the conduct of Ibrahim, the fat orderly, suggested the required inspiration. Disregarding instructions not to worry me, he entered the room in the heat of early afternoon, sat down, leaned his head on the table, and began to snore. That really did upset my nerves, and consciously I stimulated the sense of irritation until I

was furious with the Turkish orderly. Finally, blending this anger with the need of producing some sort of a fit, I considered how best to attack him, and what attitude to adopt afterwards.

I jumped out of bed, opened the door, seized Ibrahim round the middle, and flung him into the corridor, while he yelled with surprise. Next I sat down on the bed and began tearing the sheets into long strips. The corporal of the guard, with another Turkish soldier, half-opened the door cautiously and looked inside. I stared at them blankly, then got into bed and lay down quietly, facing the wall.

Ibrahim returned presently with the doctor of the day, who entered with a surprised and quizzical "Qu'est-ce qu'il y'a?"

"Doctor," I said, "I fail to remember what I've been doing during the last five minutes. But I feel I've been through a crisis. Even now my head swims. I suffer from acute *vertige*."

Followed a long explanation in Turkish, with gestures, from Ibrahim. The doctor felt my pulse, which fortunately had accelerated during the calculated excitement of heaving the orderly out of the room.

"Calmez-vous donc," said the doctor. "Tout sera bien après quelques semaines." I liked the suggestion of "some weeks," for anything might happen in that time.

Before leaving me the doctor prescribed some sort of a bromide mixture, with calming qualities. The first performance, I felt, had been rather a success. As for the bromide, I poured it out of the window during the night. The bottle was filled again in the morning.

Next day was a fitless one, and by the evening I felt that something must be done to maintain my reputation. Still knowing little of how a man with my complaints must act, I thought—wrongly, as I discovered later—that somnambulism would fit in with the general scheme of abnormality.

I stayed awake until 2 A.M.; then, wearing a night-shirt, walked woodenly into the passage, with arms outstretched and head upheld. The guard was dozing on a bench that faced the door, and as I passed he took not the least notice. Feeling hurt at such disregard, I turned and passed him again, this time taking care to nudge his knee. He rubbed his eyes, shrilled an exclamation, and began running in the opposite direction. When he returned with the sergeant of the guard, a quarter of an hour later, I was in bed and apparently asleep.

During the week that followed I gave several minor performances. Soon, however, I was ousted from my single-bedded blessedness by a more worthy [madman. A Turkish soldier passed into a violent delirium, and ran down the corridor on all fours, calling out that he was a horse. This was far more striking than anything I had imagined or attempted. The delirious Turk was therefore confined apart in my little

room, while I shared a ward with four Turkish officers.

I chose melancholia for the first demonstration in the new quarters. All day I stared at the ceiling, and answered questions with a rough "oui" or "non," without looking at the questioner. Then, at 3 A.M., when the four Turks were asleep, I picked up a medicine bottle, half-filled with bromide mixture, and flung it at the wall. It struck, tinkled, and scattered in fragments; while three of the Turkish officers woke and sat up in bed.

"Air-raid?" suggested one of them—for at that time British bombers from Mudros were visiting Constantinople on most moonlit nights.

"No, a bottle," said another, switching on a light and pointing to the splintered glass. He proceeded to protest angrily in Turkish, and I caught the words "mad Englishman." He turned off the light, and all lay down again. When the night orderly arrived he found everything quiet, and dared ask no questions, for fear of disturbing the Turkish officers. Next morning, however, the senior officer in the ward protested to the chief doctor against being submitted to disturbances, and possible violence, from a mentally afflicted Englishman. I was then moved into a large room where were W., R., Ms., and other officer-prisoners.

To sham violence before fellow-Britishers was almost impossible, I found, even though they co-operated in casting dust into Turkish eyes. I modified the fits into starts and twitchings, whenever a sudden noise coincided with the presence of a doctor. The melancholia and loss of memory I retained, for these were easy of accomplishment.

In any case I should have been obliged to become normal enough for walks outside the hospital, if my hopes were to become realities. Staying in Constantinople when the rest of the party had returned to Anatolia was all very well, but it availed nothing unless I could get into touch with people who might help me to plan an escape.

Each Sunday morning such British officers as were not confined to bed attended service at the Crimean Memorial Church, off the Grande Rue de Pera. I wished to make use of this fact in my search for helpers. Besides the clergyman himself there were still a few British civilians free in Constantinople, and most of them visited the church on Sunday mornings. Above all, there would be the chance of asking advice from Miss W., a very plucky and noble lady who had taken great risks upon herself in helping prisoners. Already she had managed to visit us at Gumuch Souyou, in the company of a Dutch diplomat's wife who came with official sanction.

A fortnight of fairly mild behaviour gained me permission to attend divine service. With guards keeping a yard or so behind us we walked through the Grande Rue de Pera, with its crowd of evident sympathisers, and so to the church at the bottom of a winding side-

street. Then, for an hour, I was in England. Even to such a constant absentee from church services as myself all England was suggested by the pretty little building, with its floor smoothly flagged in squares, its simply compact altar, its well-ordered pews, its consciously reverent congregation, its rippling organ, and—yes, by the great truths and dogmatic commonplaces that were platitutinised from its pulpit. The very sermon—dull, undistinguished, and full of the obvious levelness that one hears in any of a thousand small churches on any Sunday—brought joy unspeakable, because of its associations.

The guards, who had been standing at the back of the church with hat on head, refused to let us remain near the door when the congregation dispersed. It was inadvisable to bribe them in public; so, with a friendly wave from Miss W., and sympathetic looks from unknown British civilians, we left at once. We crossed the Golden Horn to Stamboul, and lunched at our usual restaurant, where I met Pappas Effendi again.

Presently in strolled another old acquaintance — Colonel Prince Constantine Avaloff, the Georgian. He had just arrived at Psamatia from Afion-Kara-Hissar, and brought with him the latest news from that camp—the arrival of a new commandant who seemed quite pleasant, the success of the latest concert, the delivery of a batch of parcels, the increase in price of *árak*, and other of the small happenings that filled the deadly life of a prisoner of war in Turkey. For me the most interesting item of news was that Captain Tom White was to be sent to a Constantinople hospital. Although he had said nothing about escaping, I rather thought he intended to try it. If he came to Gumuch Souyou he would be a useful companion, for I knew him to be both ingenious and unafraid. Meanwhile I revealed my own hopes to the Prince, who promised to help in any way possible. He was likely to be of use, for as a result of Georgia's submission to Germany, he was now free to move about the city without a guard. I walked back to Pera light-heartedly, with an instinctive knowledge that opportunity was in the offing.

A tousled scarecrow of a man was sitting up in a hitherto empty bed as we reentered the prisoners' ward of the hospital. His long untrimmed hair hung over an unwashed neck, his cheeks were sunken, his hands were clasped over the bedclothes that covered his shins. He never looked at us, but with an expression of the most unswerving austerity continued to read a book that lay open on his knees. As I passed I saw, from the ruling and paragraphing of the pages, that it must be a copy of the Bible.

I looked round for enlightenment, only to find myself face to face with an even stranger figure. In a bed opposite the scarecrow sat a man whose face was unnatur-

ally white. The young forehead was divided and subdivided by deep wrinkles; a golden beard tufted from the chin; the head was covered by a too-large fez, made of white linen. He grinned and waved an arm towards the Turkish orderly; but when we looked at him, he shrank back in apparent affright, then hid under the bedclothes.

"English officers," said the orderly, "come from Haidar Pasha Hospital. Both mad."

"I am not English," protested in Turkish the strange befezzed head as it shot from under the bedclothes. "I am a good Turk. The English are my enemies. I wrote to His Excellency, Enver Pasha, telling him I wished to become a Turkish officer."

"*Mulazim* Heel," continued the Turk, pointing towards the scarecrow. Then, as he swung his hand in the direction of the man who had written to Enver Pasha, "*Mulazim* Jaw-nēss."

"My name is not Jones," the Fantastick shouted, still speaking in Turkish. "I am Ahmed Hamdi Effendi."

Yet he was indeed Jones, just as much as the scarecrow opposite him was Hill. We had heard stories of their extravagant doings, but this was our first sight of the famous lunaties whose reputation had spread through every prison-camp in Turkey. The Turks believed them to be mad, and although there were sceptics, so did many of the British prisoners. When, after watching the pair for several hours, we went into the garden that evening and discussed them, we agreed that they were either real lunatics or brilliant actors.

It had all begun months earlier at Yozgad. To pass the weary time, Jones and Hill dabbled in and experimented with hypnotism and telepathy. By making ingenuity and the conjurer's artifice (at which Hill was an expert) adjuncts of their séances, they nonplussed fellow-prisoners and Turks alike; for it was impossible to tell whether trickery or something inexplicable was the basis of their astonishing demonstrations. By means of the Spirit of Music (a hidden lamp with the wick turned too high), the Buried Treasure Guarded by Arms (some coins and an old pistol that were first placed in position and then "revealed" by digging), the Miraculous Photographs (taken with a secret camera designed and constructed by themselves), and other devices, they reduced the camp commandant and his staff to a state of bewildered fear. When they had hoodwinked the commandant into the belief that they could exchange mind-messages with local civilians, he confined them in a small room, and allowed no communication with other prisoners.

From this time onward, moreover, Jones and Hill showed apparent dread of their fellow-prisoners. The British officers at Yozgad wanted to destroy them, they informed the Turkish commandant, adding a plea for protection. Meanwhile their

hair and beards grew longer and more untrimmed, their general appearance stranger and wilder. Perhaps their most impressive exploit at Yozgad was when a guard found them hanging side by side on ropes that were suspended from a beam, the chairs that supported their weight having been kicked away just before he entered the room. He cut down the dangling bodies; and his tale confirmed the commandant in the belief that the spiritualistic prisoners were altogether insane.

A few days later they went under escort to Constantinople, and were admitted to Haidar Pasha Hospital. From this hospital their reputation spread all over Constantinople. Long before they were transferred to Gumuch Souyou I had heard how Hill read the Bible all day, and uttered never a word except when he prayed aloud; and how Jones, having in two months learned to talk Turkish perfectly, proclaimed himself a Turk, and would speak no other language. His name, he insisted time and again, was Ahmed Hamdi Effendi. He disregarded all Britishers in Haidar Pasha Hospital, unless it were to tell the Turkish doctor that Jones was mad, and therefore, as the afflicted of Allah, more to be pitied than blamed.

Once he threw himself into the pond in the garden. Once, having received the usual Red Cross monthly remittance from an official of the Dutch Legation, he tore the bank-notes in two, threw the scraps of paper across the room, and declared that he wanted no English money. During an air-raid over Constantinople he ran into the open and demanded a gun, so that he might shoot down the British aeroplanes.

At about sundown on his first evening with us Hill closed the Bible, stepped out of bed, and knelt down, facing the east. Then, without a pause, he recited prayers in a loud voice for twenty minutes. Several Turks came in to listen, while Jones, tapping his befezzed head, explained to them that the kneeling figure was mad.

Each morning and each evening Hill knelt on the floor and prayed aloud. Sometimes, during the night, he would walk to another bedside, wake up its occupant, and exhort him to prayer. For the rest he spoke never a word other than "Yes" or "No" or "I don't know," in answer to questions. All day he sat in bed, with eyes riveted on the Bible by unswerving concentration, or clasped his head and appeared lost in meditation. When the doctor examined him he paid not the slightest attention; but when an effort was made to take away the Bible, he clutched it desperately, and was evidently ready to use violence. His hair and beard grew longer and more tousled, until he was forcibly shaved; whereupon, with his hollowed cheeks and sunken, glowing eyes, he looked more of a scarecrow than ever.

Jones kept himself quite

dapper in his own peculiar fashion. His curly golden beard and moustache seemed to be his especial pride. At first Ms. attempted conversations with him; but as he always turned away and showed fright, we left him alone. Yet twice he sought out the chief doctor, and complained that the British officers wanted to murder him. Being a Turk, he continued, why was he kept in a room with Englishmen, who were his enemies and wanted to hurt him.

Beyond laughing and remarking how sad it was that our comrade should be so mad, the chief doctor took no notice. Thereupon Ahmed Hamdi sat down and wrote a letter of furious complaint to His Excellency Enver Pasha, Minister of War in the Young Turk government, and incidentally the most ruthless desperado in that all-desperado body the Committee of Union and Progress.

I still remember every detail and movement of an absurd scene. Ms. lay asleep one hot afternoon, with a bare foot protruding through the bars at the bottom of the bed. R. crawled across the floor, intending to crouch beneath Ms.'s bedstead and tickle the sole of his foot with a feather. Jones, whose bed was next to that of Ms., shrank back and made a tentative move towards the door as R. glided nearer. R. looked up casually from his all-fours position and found the lunatic face glaring at him with wide-open, rolling eyes. The pair stared at each other surprisedly for a few seconds; then Ahmed Hamdi Jones yelled, leaped from his bed, and ran out of the room.

If that were acting, we agreed, it was very wonderful acting. We inclined to the theory that Hill and Jones had in the beginning merely shammed lunacy as a passport for England, but that under the mental stress and nervous strain of living their abnormal rôles had really become insane. Another suggestion was that had they lost their reason already at Yozgad, as a result of dabbling overmuch in spiritualism.

It was White who solved the mystery, although at the time he revealed it only to me. With a badly-marked ankle, the result of a too-hot poultice well in evidence, he arrived one day from Afion-Kara-Hissar, and suggested to the doctors that the said ankle was tubercular. He was placed in the bed next to the scarecrow's.

Hill had let it be known that he was undertaking a forty days' penance, during which he would eat nothing but bread. All other food offered him by the Turks he ignored. After a few days of semi-starvation his cheek-bones were more prominent than ever, his cheeks more hollowed, and the colour of his face was an unhealthy faint yellow.

In the middle of the night, when everybody else was asleep, White woke him and passed over a note. In this, as a fellow-Australian, he offered any sort of assistance that

might be acceptable. Then he handed Hill some chocolate and biscuits, taken from a newly-arrived parcel. These the scarecrow accepted, and, not daring to whisper in case somebody were listening, wrote a sanely-worded message thanking White for the offer, which he accepted. It contained also a warning that, for safety's sake, the other Britishers must be led to believe that both he and Jones were mad.

Thereafter White fed him secretly each night. In the daytime he maintained his long fast, to the great astonishment of the Turks. White also helped by complaining that the madman woke him at night-time and asked him to pray.

Later, having heard escape-talk between White and me, Hill wrote down an address where we might hide in Constantinople, and let me into the secret that he was pretending lunacy so as to be sent out of the country as a madman.

Now that I knew the scarecrow and Ahmed Hamdi Jones to be sane as myself, I marvelled at their flawless presentation of different aspects of lunacy, and at the determination which allowed them to play their strange parts for months. Hill, in particular, had a difficult rôle, and I wondered that his mind never gave way under it. To sit up in bed for twelve hours a day, reading and re-reading a Bible; to talk to nobody and look at nobody, and to show no sign of interest when vital subjects were being discussed by fellow-prisoners a few yards away; to pray aloud for nearly half an hour each morning and evening, in the presence of a dozen people; to maintain an expression of rigid melancholy, and not to let even the ghost of a smile touch one's features for many weeks—all this must require almost inhuman concentration.

Jones had a far better time, for his specialty was not studied tragedy but spontaneous farce. He seemed to enjoy enormously the complete fooling of all around him, the planning of a new fantasy and the head-over-heels performance of it, without the restraint of convention or ridicule, or a sense of the normal.

Cheerful lunacy, in fact, is great fun. Even in my own minor assumptions of a state of unreason I had found it very stimulating and amusing. A mental holiday from logic, custom, the consideration of public opinion and other irksome boundaries of artificial stability, is glorious. Itself untrammelled, the mind can watch from a spectator's point of view the patchwork restraints and littlenesses of civilisation, and take delight in tilting at them.

Often I envied Jones, with his fez, his golden beard, and his rôle of Ahmed Hamdi Effendi, as he talked to a group of Turkish officers. They would laugh at him openly; but secretly he would laugh much more heartily at them.

Few things in our roomful of nine British officers were not farcical. Only one of us —old W. with his wounded arm—had any real claim to be in hospital. R., with a healed wound-scar dating back to the Gallipoli campaign, C., with sciatica and late middle-age, and Ms., with a weak knee dating back to before the war, were trying to build up a case for release as exchanged prisoners of war. Jones and Hill, by means of magnificent acting, had made everybody believe in their assumed madness, and were also hoping to be sent home in consequence. "Wormy"—formerly aide-de-camp to General Townsend—wanted to remain a hospital patient because he had friends and amusements in Constantinople, and achieved this wish by means of mythical *hæmorrhages.*

For my part, I still gave false evidence of nervous disorders, although such efforts were dwarfed by the exploits of Jones and Hill. In any case, it was to my interest to show only mild symptoms, such as fits of trembling during an air-raid, or whenever a gun was fired. Had I been more violent, I should not have been allowed into the city on Sundays, at a time when I had made useful acquaintances and was plotting an escape.

So the strange days passed. Hill and Jones, spurred by reports of a near-future exchange of prisoners, gave constant and enlivening performances. Ms. and R. cultivated effective limps. "Wormy" amused himself. White and I discussed our plans while strolling in the garden. Each morning the doctor walked once round the ward, said to each patient, "Bonjour, ça va bien?" signed the diet sheets, and left us. Of other medical attendance there was none, except when W.'s arm was operated on, or when Jones complained to the chief doctor about our desire to murder him.

How the madmen were included in the first batch of British prisoners to be exchanged from Turkey, how they were led on board the Red Cross ship that the Turks had allowed to the Gulf of Smyrna, how Ahmed Hamdi Jones protested against being handed over to his enemies the British, and how he and the Bible-reader miraculously recovered their sanity as soon as the British vessel had left Turkish waters—all that is a story in itself.

(To be continued.)

SIMON.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

XXI. MR CARRINGTON'S WALK.

MR CARRINGTON'S easy saunter lasted till he had turned out of the street on which the King's Arms stood, when it passed into an easy walk. Though he had seemed on the whole disinclined to go in the Keldale direction that morning, nevertheless he continued to head that way till at last he was on the highroad with the little town behind him; and then his pace altered again. He stepped out now like the sportsman he was, and was doing a good four miles an hour by the time he was out of sight of the last houses.

For a man who had come out to gather ideas as to the sporting possibilities of the country, Mr Carrington seemed to pay singularly little attention to his surroundings. He appeared, in fact, to be thinking about something else all the time, and the first sign of interest he showed in anything outside his thoughts was when he found himself within sight of the lodge gates of Keldale House, with the avenue sweeping away from the road towards the roofs and chimneys amid the trees. At the sight of this he stopped, and leaning over the low wall at the roadside gazed with much interest at the scene of the tragedy he had heard so much of last night. The choice spirits, had they been there to see, would have been gratified to find that their graphic narratives had sent this indolent-looking gentleman to view the spot so swiftly.

From the house and grounds his eye travelled back to the road, and then surveyed the surrounding country very attentively. He even stood on top of the wall to get a wider view; and then all of a sudden he jumped down again and adopted the reverse procedure, bending now so that little more than his head appeared above the wall. And the reason for this change of plan appeared to be a figure which had emerged from the trees and began to move along a path between the fields.

Mr Carrington studied this figure with concentrated attention, and as it drew nearer and became more distinct a light leapt into his eye that gave him a somewhat different expression from any his acquaintances of last night had observed. He saw that the path followed a small stream and ran at an angle to the highroad, joining it at last at a point some little distance back towards the town. He looked quickly up and down the road. Not a soul was in sight to see his next very curious performance. The leisurely Mr Car-

rington crossed to the farther side, where he was invisible from the path, and then set out to run at a rapid pace till he reached the junction of path and road. And then he turned down the path.

But now his bearing altered again in a very extraordinary way. His gait fell once more to a saunter, and his angling enthusiasm seemed suddenly to have returned, for he frequently studied the burn as he strolled along, and there was no sign of any thoughtfulness on his ingenuous countenance. There were a few willows beside the path, and the path itself meandered, and this was doubtless the reason why he appeared entirely unconscious of the approach of another foot passenger till they were within a few yards of one another. And then Mr Carrington stopped suddenly, seemed to hesitate, pulled out his watch and glanced at it, and then with an apologetic air raised his hat.

The other foot passenger was face to face with him now, a slim figure in black, with a sweet serious face.

"Excuse me," said Mr Carrington, "but can you tell me where this path leads?"

He was so polite and so evidently anxious to give no offence, and his face was such a certificate to his amiable character, that the girl stopped too and answered without hesitation—

"It leads to Keldale House."

"Keldale House?" he repeated, and then the idea seemed to arouse associations. "By Jove!" he exclaimed. "Really? I'm an utter stranger here, but isn't that the place where the murder took place?"

Had Mr Carrington been a really observant man, one would think he would have noticed the sudden change of expression in the girl's face—as if he had aroused painful thoughts. He did seem to look at her for an instant as he asked the question, but then turned his gaze towards the distant glimpse of the house.

"Yes," she murmured, and looked as though she wanted to pass on; but Mr Carrington seemed so excited by his discovery that he never noticed this, and still stood right in her path.

"How very interesting!" he murmured. "By Jove, how very interesting." And then, with the air of passing on a still more interesting piece of news, he said suddenly, "I hear they have arrested Sir Malcolm Cromarty."

This time he kept his monocle full on her.

"Arrested him!" she cried. "What for?"

This question, put with the most palpable wonder, seemed to disconcert Mr Carrington considerably. He even hesitated in a very unusual way for him.

"For—for the murder, of course."

Her eyes opened very wide.

"For Sir Reginald's murder? How ridiculous!"

Again Mr Carrington seemed a little disconcerted.

"Er—why is it ridiculous?" he asked. "Of course I—I

know nothing about the gentleman."

"Evidently!" she agreed, with reproach in her eyes. "If Sir Malcolm really has been arrested, it can only have been for something quite silly. He couldn't commit a murder!"

The fact that this tribute to the baronet's innocence was not wholly devoid of a flavour of criticism seemed to strike Mr Carrington, for his eye twinkled for an instant.

"You are acquainted with him then?" said he.

"I am staying at Keldale; in fact I am a relation."

There was no doubt of her intention to rebuke the too-garrulous gentleman by this information, and it succeeded completely. He passed at once to the extreme of apology.

"Oh! I beg your pardon!" he exclaimed. "I had no idea. Really, I hope you will accept my apologies, Miss—er—Cromarty."

"Miss Farmond," she corrected.

"Miss Farmond, I mean. It was frightfully tactless of me!"

He said it so nicely, and looked so innocently guilty and so contrite, that her look lost its touch of indignation.

"I still can't understand what you mean about Sir Malcolm being arrested," she said. "How did you hear?"

"Oh, I was very likely misinformed. An old fellow at the hotel last night was saying so."

Her eye began to grow indignant again.

"What old fellow?"

"Red hair, shaky knees, bit of a stammer, answers to the name of Sandy, I believe."

"Old Sandy Donaldson!" she exclaimed. "That drunken old thing! He was simply talking nonsense as usual!"

"He seemed a little in liquor," he admitted, "but you see I am a mere stranger. I didn't realise what a loose authority I quoted. There is nothing in the report, I am certain. And this path leads only to Keldale House? Thank you very much. Good morning!"

How Mr Carrington had obtained this erroneous information from a person whose back he had merely seen for a couple of minutes the night before, as the reprobate in question was being ejected from the King's Arms, he did not stop to explain. In fact at this point he showed no inclination to continue the conversation, but bowing very politely continued his stroll.

But the effect of the conversation on him remained, and a very marked effect it appeared to be. He took no interest in the burn any longer, but paced slowly on, his eyes sometimes on the path and sometimes staring upwards at the heavens. So far as his face revealed his sensations, they seemed to be compounded of surprise and perplexity. Several times he shook his head as though some very baffling point had cropped up in his thoughts, and once he murmured—

"I'm damned!"

When the path reached the

policies of the house, he stopped and seemed to take some interest in his surroundings once more. For a moment it was clear that he was tempted to enter the plantations, and then he shook his head and turned back.

All the way home he remained immersed in thought, and only recovered his nonchalant air as he entered the door of the King's Arms. He was the same easy-going, smiling young man of fashion, as he passed the time of day with Miss Peterkin; but when he had shut the door of his private sitting-room, and dropped into an easy-chair over the fire, he again became so absorbed in thought that he had to be reminded that the hour of luncheon had passed.

Thought seemed to vanish during lunch, but when he had retired to his room again it returned for another half-hour. At the end of that time he apparently came to a decision, and jumping up briskly repaired to the manageress's room. And when Miss Peterkin was taken into his confidence, it appeared that the whole problem had merely concerned the question of taking either a shooting or a fishing for next season.

"I have been thinking," said he, "that my best plan will perhaps be to call upon Mr Simon Rattar and see whether he knows of anything to let. I gather that he is agent for several estates in the county. What do you advise?"

Miss Peterkin decidedly advised this course, so a few minutes later Mr Carrington strolled off towards the lawyer's office.

XXII. MR CARRINGTON AND THE FISCAL.

The card handed into Mr Simon Rattar contained merely the name "Mr F. T. Carrington" and the address "Sports Club." Simon gazed at it cautiously and in silence for the better part of a minute; and when he glanced up at his head clerk to tell him that Mr Carrington might be admitted, Mr Ison was struck by the curious glint in his eye. It seemed to him to indicate that the Fiscal was very wide awake at that moment; it struck him also that Mr Rattar was not altogether surprised by the appearance of this visitor.

The agreeable stranger began by explaining very frankly that he thought of renting a place for next season where he could secure good fishing and a little shooting, and wondered if any of the properties Mr Rattar was agent for would suit him. Simon grunted and waited for this overture to develop.

"What about Keldale House?" the sporting visitor suggested. "That's the place where the murder was committed, isn't it?" and then he laughed. "Your eye betrays you, Mr Rattar!" said he.

The lawyer seemed to start ever so slightly.

"Indeed?" he murmured.

"Look here," said Carrington with a candid smile, "let's put our cards on the table. You know my business?"

"Are you a detective?" asked the lawyer.

Mr Carrington smiled and nodded.

"I am; or rather I prefer to call myself a private inquiry agent. People expect so much of a detective, don't they?"

Simon grunted, but made no other comment.

"In a case like this," continued Carrington, "when one is called in weeks too late, and the household broom and scrubbing-brush and garden rake have removed most of the possible clues, and witnesses' recollections have developed into picturesque legends, it is better to rouse as few expectations as possible, since it is probably impossible to find anything out. However, in the capacity of a mere inquiry agent, I have come to pick up anything I can. May I smoke?"

He asked in his usual easy-going voice and with his usual candid smile, and then his eye was arrested by an inscription printed in capital letters and hung in a handsome frame upon the office wall. It ran—

MY THREE RULES OF LIFE.

1. I DO NOT SMOKE.
2. I LAY BY A THIRD OF MY INCOME.
3. I NEVER RIDE WHEN I CAN WALK.

Beneath these precepts appeared the lithographed signature of an eminent philanthropist, but it seemed reasonable to assume that they also formed the guiding maxims of Mr Simon Rattar.

His visitor politely apologised for his question.

"I had not noticed this warning," said he.

"Smoke if you like. My clients sometimes do. I don't myself," said the lawyer.

His visitor thanked him, placed a cigarette in his amber holder, lit it, and let his eyes follow the smoke upwards.

Mr Rattar, on his part, seemed in his closest, most taciturn humour. His grunt and his nod had, in fact, seldom formed a greater proportion of his conversation. He made no further comment at all now, but waited in silence for his visitor to proceed.

"Well," resumed Carrington, "the simple facts of the case are these. I have been engaged through a certain firm of London lawyers, whose name I am not permitted to mention, on behalf of a person whose name I don't know."

At this a flash of keen interest showed for an instant in Simon's eye, and then it became as cold as ever again.

"Indeed?" said he.

"I am allowed to incur expense," continued the other, "up to a certain figure, which is so handsome that it gives me practically a free hand so far as that is concerned. On the other hand, the arrangement entails certain difficul-

ties which I daresay you, Mr Rattar, as a lawyer, and especially as a Procurator-Fiscal accustomed to investigate cases of crime, will readily understand."

"Quite so, quite so," agreed Mr Rattar, who seemed to be distinctly relaxing already from his guarded attitude.

"I arrived last night, put up at the King's Arms—where, I gathered beforehand, that the local gossip could best be collected, and in the course of the evening I collected enough to hang at least two people; and in the course of a few more evenings I shall probably have enough to hang half a dozen—if one can believe, say, a twentieth of what one hears. This morning I strolled out to Keldale House and had a look at it from the road, and I learned that it was a large mansion standing among trees. That's all I have been able to do so far."

"Nothing more than that?"

Mr Carrington seemed to have a singularly short memory.

"I think that's the lot," said he. "And, what is more, it seems to me the sum total of all I am likely to do without a little assistance from somebody in possession of rather more authentic facts than my friend Miss Peterkin and her visitors."

"I quite understand," said the lawyer; and it was plain that his interest was now thoroughly enlisted.

"Well," continued Mr Carrington, "I thought things over, and, rightly or wrongly, I came to this decision. My employer, whoever he is, has made it an absolute condition that his name is not to be known. His reasons may have been the best imaginable, but it obviously made it impossible for me to get any information out of *him*. For my own reasons I always prefer to make my inquiries in these cases in the guise of an unsuspected outsider, whenever it is possible; and it happens to be particularly possible in this case, since nobody here knows me from Adam. But I must get facts—as distinguished from the King's Arms gossip,—and how was I to get them without giving myself away? That was the problem, and I soon realised that it was insoluble. I saw I must confide in somebody, and so I came to the decision to confide in you."

Simon nodded and made a sound that seemed to indicate distinctly his opinion that Mr Carrington had come to a sensible decision.

"You were the obvious person, for several reasons," resumed Carrington. "In the first place, you could pretty safely be regarded as above suspicion yourself—if you will pardon my associating even the word suspicion with a Procurator-Fiscal." He smiled his most agreeable smile, and the Fiscal allowed his features to relax sympathetically. "In the second place, you know more about the case than anybody else. And in the third place, I gather that you are—

if I may say so—a gentleman of unusual discretion."

Again he smiled pleasantly, and again Mr Rattar's features relaxed.

"Finally," added Carrington, "knowing your connection with the Cromarty estate, I thought it long odds that you were either actually my employer or acting for him, and therefore I should be giving nothing away by telling you my business. And when I mentioned Keldale House and the murder I saw that I was right!"

He laughed, and Simon permitted himself to smile. Yet his answer was as cautious as ever.

"Well, Mr Carrington?" said he.

"Well," said Carrington, "if you actually are my employer and we both lay our cards on the table, there's much to be gained, and—if I may say so—really nothing to be lost. I won't give you away if you won't give me."

The lawyer's nod seemed to imply emphatic assent, and the other went on—

"I'll keep you informed of everything I'm doing and anything I may happen to discover, and you can give me very valuable information as to what precisely is known already. Otherwise, of course, one could hardly exchange confidences so freely. Frankly, then, you engaged me to come down here?"

Even then Simon's caution seemed to linger for an instant. The next he answered briefly but decidedly—

"Yes."

"Very well, now to business. I got a certain amount of literature on the case before I left town, and Miss Peterkin gave me some very valuable additions in the shape of the accounts in the local papers. Are there any facts known to you or the police beyond those I have read?"

Simon considered the question, and then shook his head.

"None that I can think of, and I fear the local police will be able to add no information that can assist you."

"They are the usual not too intelligent country bobbies, I suppose?"

"Quite so," said Simon.

"In that case," asked Mr Carrington, still in his easy voice, but with a quick turn of his eyeglass towards the lawyer, "why was no outside assistance called in at once?"

For a moment Simon Rattar's satisfaction with his visitor seemed to be diminished. He seemed, in fact, a little disconcerted, and his reply again became little more than a grunt.

"Quite satisfied with them," seemed to be the reading of his answer.

"Well," said Carrington, "no doubt you knew best, Mr Rattar."

His eyes thoughtfully followed the smoke of his cigarette upwards for a moment, and then he said—

"That being so, my first step had better be to visit Keldale House and see whether it is still possible to find any

small point the local professionals have overlooked."

Mr Rattar seemed to disapprove of this.

"Nothing to discover," said he. "And they will know what you have come about."

Mr Carrington smiled.

"I think, Mr Rattar, that, on the whole, my appearance provokes no great amount of suspicion."

"Your appearance—no," admitted Simon; "but——"

"Well, if I go to Keldale armed with a card of introduction from you, to make inquiry about the shootings, I think I can undertake to turn the conversation on to other matters without exciting suspicion."

"Conversation with whom?" inquired the lawyer sceptically.

"I had thought of Mr Bisset, the butler."

"Oh——" began Mr Rattar with a note of surprise, and then pulled himself up.

"Yes," smiled Mr Carrington, "I have picked up a little about the household. My friends of last night were exceedingly communicative—very gossipy, indeed. I rather gather that omniscience is Mr Bisset's foible, and that he is not averse from conversation."

The look in Simon's eye seemed to indicate that his respect for this easy-going young man was increasing, though whether his liking for him was also increased thereby was not so manifest. His reply was again a mere grunt.

"Well, that can easily be arranged," said Carrington, "and it is obviously the first thing to do."

He blew a ring of smoke from his lips, skilfully sent a second ring in chase of it, and then turning his monocle again on the lawyer, inquired (though not in a tone that seemed to indicate any very acute interest in the question)—

"Who do you think yourself murdered Sir Reginald Cromarty?"

XXIII. SIMON'S VIEWS.

"Well," said Mr Rattar deliberately, "I think myself that the actual evidence is very slight and extremely inconclusive."

"You mean the direct evidence afforded by the unfastened window, position of the body, table said to have been overturned, and so forth?"

"Exactly. That evidence is slight, but so far as it goes it seems to me to point to entry by the door, and to the man having been in the house for some little time previously."

"Well?" said Carrington in an encouraging voice.

"So much for the direct evidence. I may be wrong, but that is my decided opinion. No bad characters are known to the police to have been in the county at that time, and there was no robbery."

"Apparently confirming the direct evidence?"

"Decidedly confirming it—or so it seems to me."

"Then you think there is something in the popular theory that the present baronet and Miss Farmond were the guilty parties?"

Simon was silent for a moment, but his face was unusually expressive.

"I fear it looks like it."

"An unpleasant conclusion for you to come to," observed Mr Carrington. "You are the family lawyer, I understand?"

"Very unpleasant," Mr Rattar agreed. "But of course there is no absolute proof."

"Naturally; or they'd have been arrested by now. What sort of a fellow is Sir Malcolm?"

"My own experience of him," said the lawyer drily, "is chiefly confined to his visits to my office to borrow money of me."

"Indeed?" said Carrington with interest. "That sort of fellow, is he? He writes, I understand."

Simon nodded.

"Any other known vices?"

"I know little about his vices, except that they cost him considerably more than he could possibly have paid, had it not been for Sir Reginald's death."

"So the motive is plain enough. Any evidence against him?"

Simon pursed his lips and became exceedingly grave.

"When questioned next morning by the superintendent of police and myself, he led us to understand that he had retired to bed early, and was in no position to hear or notice anything. I have since found that he was in the habit of sitting up late."

"'In the habit,'" repeated Carrington quickly. "But you don't suggest he sat up that night in particular?"

"Undoubtedly he sat up that night."

"But merely as he always did?"

"He might have been waiting for his chance on the previous nights."

Carrington smoked thoughtfully for a moment and then asked—

"But there is no evidence that he left his room, or was heard moving about that night, is there?"

"There is not yet any positive evidence. But he was obviously in a position to do so."

"Was his room near or over the library?"

"N—no," said the Fiscal, and there seemed to be a hint of reluctance in his voice.

Carrington glanced at him quickly, and then gazed up at the ceiling.

"What sort of a girl is Miss Farmond?" he inquired next.

"She is the illegitimate daughter of a brother of the late Sir Reginald's."

Carrington nodded.

"So I gathered from the local gossips. But that fact is hardly against her, is it?"

"Why not?"

Carrington looked a little surprised.

"Girls don't generally murder their uncles for choice, in

my own experience—especially if they are also their benefactors."

"This was hardly the usual relationship," said the lawyer with a touch of significance.

"Do you suggest that the irregularity is apt to breed crime?"

Simon's grunt seemed to signify considerable doubt as to the morals of this type of relative.

"But what sort of girl is she otherwise?"

"I should call Miss Farmond the insinuating type. A young man like yourself would probably find her very attractive—at first anyhow."

Mr Carrington seemed to ponder for a moment on this suggestive description of Miss Farmond's allurements. And then he asked—

"Is it the case that she is engaged to Sir Malcolm?"

"Certainly."

"You are sure?"

Something in his voice seemed to make the lawyer reflect.

"Is it called in question?" he asked.

Carrington shook his head.

"By nobody who has spoken to me on the subject. But I understand that it has not yet been announced."

"No," said Simon, "it was a secret engagement; and marriage would have been impossible while Sir Reginald lived."

"So there we get the motive on her part. And you yourself, Mr Rattar, *know* both these young people, and you believe that this accusation against them is probably well founded?"

"I believe, Mr Carrington, that there is no proof, and probably never will be any; but all the evidence, positive and negative, together with the question of motive, points to nobody else. What alternative is possible?"

"That is the difficulty, so far," agreed Carrington, but his thoughts at the moment seemed to be following his smoke rings up towards the ceiling. For a few moments he was silent, and then he asked—

"What other people benefited by the will, and to what extent?"

The lawyer went to his safe, brought out the will, and read through the legacies to the servants, mentioning that the chauffeur and gardener were excluded by circumstances from suspicion.

"That leaves Mr Bisset," observed Carrington. "Well, I shall be seeing him to-morrow. Any other legatees who might conceivably have committed the crime?"

Simon looked serious, and spoke with a little reluctance that he seemed to make no effort to conceal.

"There is a relative of the family, a Mr Cromarty of Stanesland, who certainly benefited considerably by the will, and who certainly lives in the neighbourhood—if one once admitted the possibility of the crime being committed by some one outside the house. And I admit that it is a possibility."

"Ah!" said Carrington. "I heard about him last night, but so far suspicion certainly hasn't fastened on him. What sort of a fellow is he?"

"He has lived the greater part of his life in the wilder parts of America—rather what one might call a rough-and-ready customer."

It was apparent that Mr Carrington, for all his easy-going air, was extremely interested.

"This is quite interesting!" he murmured. "To what extent did he benefit by the will?"

"£1200."

"£1200!" Carrington repeated the words with an odd intonation and stared very hard at the lawyer. There was no doubt that his interest was highly excited now, and yet it seemed to be rather a different quality of interest this time.

"A considerable sum," said Simon.

"That is the only point about it which strikes you?"

Simon was manifestly puzzled.

"What else?" he inquired.

"No coincidence occurs to you?"

The lawyer's puzzled look remained, and the next instant Carrington broke into a hearty laugh.

"I beg your pardon, Mr Rattar!" he cried. "What an owl I am! I have just been dealing lately with a case where that sum of money was involved, and for the moment I mixed the two up together!" He laughed again, and then resuming his business-like air, asked, "Now, what else about this Mr Cromarty? You say he is a relation. Near or distant?"

"Oh, quite distant. Another branch altogether."

"Younger branch, I presume."

"Poorer, but not younger. He is said to be the head of the family."

"Really!" exclaimed Mr Carrington, and this information seemed to have set him thinking again. "He is the head of the family, and I hear he took up the case with some energy."

Simon's grunt seemed to be critical.

"He got in our way," he said.

"Got in your way, did he?"

Carrington was silent for a few moments, and then said—

"Well, I am afraid I have taken up a great deal of your time. May I have a line of introduction to Mr Bisset before I go?"

While the line was being written he walked over to the fire and cleared the stump of his last cigarette out of the holder. This operation was very deliberately performed, and through it his eyes seemed scarcely to note what his hands were doing.

He put the note in his pocket, shook hands, and then, just as he was going, he said—

"I want to understand the lie of the land as exactly as possible. Your own attitude, so far has been, I take it, no proof, therefore no arrest; but a nasty family scandal left festering, so you decided to call me in. Now, I want to

know this—Is there anybody else in the neighbourhood who knows that I have been sent for?"

Mr Rattar replied with even more than his usual deliberation, and after what is said by foreigners to be the national habit his reply consisted of another question.

"You say that your employer made a particular point of having his identity concealed?"

"Yes, a particular point."

"Doesn't that answer your question, Mr Carrington?"

"No," said Carrington, "not in the least. I am asking now whether there is any other employer in this neighbourhood besides yourself. And I may say that I ask for the very good reason that it might be awkward for me if there were one and I didn't know him, while if I did know him, I could consult with him if it happened to be advisable. Is there any one?"

He seemed to hang on the lawyer's answer, and Simon to dislike making the answer.

Yet when he did make it, it was quite emphatic.

"No," he replied.

"That's all right then," said Mr Carrington with his brightest smile. "Good afternoon, Mr Rattar!"

The smile faded from his ingenuous face the moment the door had closed behind him, and it was a very thoughtful Mr Carrington who slowly went downstairs and strolled along the pavement. If his morning's interview had puzzled him, his afternoon's interview seemed to have baffled him completely. He even forgot to relapse into the thoughtless young sportsman when he entered the hotel, and his friend the manageress, after eyeing him with great surprise, cried archly—

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr Carrington! About shooting or fishing, I'm sure!"

Mr Carrington recovered his pleasant spirits instantly.

"Quite right," said he, "I was thinking about fishing—in very deep waters."

XXIV. MR BISSET'S ASSISTANT.

At eleven o'clock next morning a motor-car drove up to Keldale House and an exceedingly affable and pleasing stranger delivered a note from Mr Simon Rattar to Mr James Bisset. Even without an introduction Mr Carrington would have been welcome, for though Mr Bisset's sway over Keldale House was by this time almost despotic, he had begun to find that despotism has its lonely side, and to miss "the gentry." With an introduction Mr Carrington quickly discovered that Mr Bisset and the mansion he supervised were alike entirely at his disposal.

The preliminary discussion on the sporting possibilities of the estate, and the probability of its being let next season, impressed Mr Bisset very favourably indeed with his visitor; and then when the

conversation had passed very naturally to the late tragedy in the house, he was still further delighted to find that Mr Carrington not only shared his own detective enthusiasm, but was vastly interested in his views on this particular mystery.

"Come along here, sir," said he, "we can just have a look at the library, and I'll explain to you the principles of the thing."

"I'd like to see the actual scene of the crime immensely!" cried Mr Carrington eagerly. "You are sure that Lady Cromarty won't object?"

"Not her," said Bisset. "She's never in this part of the house now. She'll be none the wiser anyhow."

This argument seemed to assure Mr Carrington completely, and they went along to the library.

"Now," began Bisset, "I'll just explain to you the haill situation. Here where I'm laying this sofie cushion was the corp. Here where I'm standing the new was the wee table, and yon's the table itself."

To the disquisition that followed, Mr Carrington listened with the most intelligent air. Bisset had by this time evolved quite a number of new theories, but the one feature common to them all was the hypothesis that the murderer must have come in by the window and was certainly not an inmate of the household. His visitor said little till he had finished, and then he remarked—

"Well, Bisset, you don't seem to put much faith in the current theory, I see."

"Meaning that Sir Malcolm and Miss Farmond were concerned?" said Bisset indignantly. "That's just the ignorance of the uneducated masses, sir! The thing's physically impossible, as I have just been demonstrating!"

Carrington smiled and gently shook his head.

"I don't know much about these things," said he, "but I'm afraid I can't see the physical impossibility. It was very easy for any one in the house to come downstairs and open that door, and if Sir Reginald knew him, it would account for his silence and the absence of any kind of a struggle."

"But yon table and the windie being unfastened! And the mud I picked up myself—and the hearth-brush!"

"They scarcely make it impossible," said Carrington.

"Well, sir," demanded the butler, "what's your own theory?"

Carrington said nothing for several minutes. He strolled up and down the room, looked at the table and the window, and at last asked—

"Do you remember quite distinctly what Sir Reginald looked like when you found him—the position of the body—condition of the clothes—and everything else?"

"I see him lying there every night o' my life, just as plain as I see you now!"

"The feet were towards the door, just as though he had been facing the door when he was struck down?"

"Aye, but then my view is the body was moved——"

He was interrupted by a curious performance on Mr Carrington's part. His visitor was in fact stretching himself out on the floor on the spot where Sir Reginald was found.

"He lay like this?" he asked.

"Aye, practically just like that, sir."

"Now, Bisset," said the recumbent visitor, "just have a very good look at me and tell me if you notice any difference between me and the body of Sir Reginald."

Bisset looked for a few seconds and then exclaimed—

"Your clothes are no alike! The master's coat was kind of pulled up like about his shoulders and neck. Oh, and I mind now the tag at the back for hanging it up was broken and sticking out."

Carrington sprang to his feet with a gleam in his eye.

"The tag was not broken before he put on the coat?"

"It certainly was not that! But what's your deduction, sir?"

Carrington smiled at him.

"What do you think yourself, Bisset? You saw how I threw myself down quite carelessly and yet my coat wasn't pulled up like that."

"God, sir!" cried the butler. "You mean the corp had been pulled along the floor by the shoulders!"

Carrington nodded.

"Then he had been killed near the windie!"

"Not too fast, not too fast!" smiled Carrington. "Your own first statement which I happened to read in a back number of the newspaper the other day said that the windows were all fastened when Sir Reginald came into the room."

"Ah, but I've been altering my opinion on that point, sir."

Carrington shook his head.

"I'm afraid because a fastened window doesn't suit your theory."

"But the master might have opened it to him, thinking it was some one he knew."

"Sounds improbable," said Carrington thoughtfully.

"But not just absolutely impossible."

"No," said Carrington, still very thoughtfully. "Not impossible."

"Sir Reginald might never have seen it was a stranger till the man was fairly inside."

Carrington smiled and shook his head.

"Thin, Bisset; very thin. Why need the man have been a stranger at all?"

Bisset's face fell.

"But surely you're not believing yon story that it was Sir Malcolm and Miss Farmond after a'?"

His visitor stood absolutely silent for a full minute. Then he seemed suddenly to banish the line of thought he was following.

"Is it quite certain that those two are engaged?" he asked.

Bisset's faced showed his surprise at the question.

"They all say so," said he.

"Have either of them admitted it?"

"No, sir."

"Why don't they acknowledge it now and get married?"

"They say it's because they daurna for fear of the scandal."

"'They' say again!" commented Carrington. "But, look here, Bisset, you have been in the house all the time. Did you think they were engaged?"

"Honestly, sir, I did not. There's nae doubt Sir Malcolm was sweet on the young lady, but deil a sign of sweetness on him did I ever see in her!"

"Do they correspond now?"

Bisset shook his head.

"Hardly at a'. But of course folks just say they are feared to now."

"Has anybody asked either of them if they are—or ever were—engaged?"

"No, sir. But if they denied it now, folks would just say the same thing."

"Yes. I see — naturally. Lady Cromarty believes it and is keeping Miss Farmond under her eye, the gossips tell me. Is that so?"

"Oh, that's true right enough, sir."

"Who told Lady Cromarty?"

"That I do not know, sir."

Again the visitor seemed to be thinking, and again to cast his thoughts aside and take up a new aspect of the case.

"Supposing," he suggested, "we were to draw the curtains and light these candles for a few minutes? It might help us to realise the whole thing."

This suggestion pleased Mr Bisset greatly, and in a minute or two the candles were lit and the curtains drawn.

"Put the table where it stood," said Carrington. "Now which was Sir Reginald's chair? This?"

He sat in it and looked slowly round the darkened, candle-lit library.

"Now," said he, "suppose I was Sir Reginald, and there came a tap at that window, what would I do?"

"If you were the master, sir, you'd go straight to the windie to see who it was."

"I wouldn't get in a funk and ring the bell?"

"No fears!" said Bisset confidently.

"And any one who knew Sir Reginald at all well could count on his not giving the alarm then if they tapped at the window?"

"They could that."

Carrington looked attentively towards the window.

"Those curtains hang close against the window, I see," he observed. "A very slight gap in them would enable any one to get a good view of the room if the blinds were not down. Were the blinds down that night?"

Bisset slapped his knee.

"The middle blind wasn't working!" he cried. "What a fool I've been not to think on the extraordinar' significance of that fac'! My, the deductions to be drawn! You've made it quite clear now, sir. The man tappit at that windie——"

"Steady, steady!" said Carrington, smiling and yet seriously; "don't you go announcing that theory! If there's anything in it—mum's the word! But mind you, Bisset, it's only a bare possibility. There's no good evidence against the door theory yet."

"Nor the table being cowpit and the body moved?"

"They might be explained."

He was thoughtful for a moment, and then said deliberately—

"I want—I mean you want certain evidence to exclude the door theory. Without that, the window theory remains a guess. Sir Malcolm is in London, I understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Likely to be coming north soon?"

"No word of it, sir."

Mr Carrington reflected for a moment, and then rose and went towards the window.

"We can draw back the curtains now," said he.

He drew them as he spoke, and on the instant stepped involuntarily back, and down went the small table. Miss Cicely Farmond was standing just outside, evidently arrested by the drawn curtains. Her eyes opened very wide indeed at the sight of Mr Carrington suddenly revealed. Her lips parted for an instant as though she would cry out, and then she hurried away.

Mr Carrington seemed more upset by this incident than one would expect from such a composed easy-going young man.

"What will they think of me?" he exclaimed. "You must be sure to tell Miss Farmond—and Lady Cromarty too if she hears of this—that I came solely to inquire about the shootings, and not to poke my nose into their library! Make that very explicit, Bisset."

Even though assured by Bisset that the young lady was the most amiable person imaginable, he was continuing to lay stress on the point when his attention was abruptly diverted by the sight of another lady in deep black walking slowly away from the house.

"Is that Lady Cromarty?" he asked; and no sooner had Bisset said yes than the window was up and Mr Carrington stepping out of it.

"I really must explain and apologise to her ladyship," said he.

"Her ladyship will never know——!" began Bisset, but the surprising visitor was already hastening after the mourning figure. Had the worthy man been able to hear the conversation which ensued, he would have been more surprised still.

"Lady Cromarty, I believe?" said the stranger in a deferential voice.

She turned quickly, and her eyes searched him with that hard glance they wore always nowadays.

"Yes, I am Lady Cromarty," she said.

"Pardon me for disturbing you," said he. "It is a mere brief matter of business. I represent an Insurance Company to which Sir Malcolm Cromarty has made certain proposals. We are not perfectly satisfied with his statements, and from other sources learn that he is engaged to be married. I have come simply to ascertain whether that is the case."

Lady Cromarty was (as Mr Carrington had shrewdly divined) no better versed in the intricate matter of insurance than the majority of her

sex, and evidently perceived nothing very unusual in this inquiry. It may be added in her excuse that the manner in which it was put by the representative of the Company was a perfect example of how a business man should address a lady.

"It is the case," said she.

"May I ask your ladyship's authority—in strict confidence, of course?" inquired the representative firmly, but very courteously.

"I learned it from my own man of business," said she.

"Thank you," said the insurance representative. "I beg that your ladyship will say nothing of my call, and I shall undertake not to mention the source of my information," and with an adequate bow he returned to the house.

Before disappearing through her library window, Mr Carrington saw that her ladyship's back was turned, and he then gave this candid, if somewhat sketchy, account of his interview to her butler.

"It suddenly struck me," said he, "that Lady Cromarty might think it somewhat unseemly of me to come inquiring about shooting so soon after her bereavement; so I gave her a somewhat different explanation. She is not likely to make any further inquiries about me, and so you need say nothing about my visit."

He was careful, however, to impress on his friend Mr Bisset that he actually had come from purely sporting motives. In fact, he professed some anxiety to get in touch with Sir Malcolm on the subject, even though assured that the young baronet had nothing to do with the shootings.

"Ah, but it will gratify him, Bisset," said he, "and I think it is the nice thing to do. Could you give me his London address?"

He jotted this down in his pocket-book, and then, as he was leaving, he said confidentially—

"You tell me that you think Sir Malcolm is interested in Miss Farmond, though she seemed not so keen on him?"

"That was the way of it to my thinking," said Bisset. "And what deduction would you draw from that, sir?"

"I should deduce," said this sympathetic and intelligent visitor, "the probable appearance of certain evidence bearing on our theories, Bisset."

Mr Bisset thought he had seldom met a pleasanter gentleman or a more helpful assistant.

XXV. A TELEGRAM.

The car took Mr Carrington straight back to the town and dropped him at the door of Mr Rattar's office.

"I shall want you again at two o'clock sharp," he said to the chauffeur, and turned in to the office.

He caught the lawyer just before he went out to lunch, and said at once—

"I want to see Sir Malcolm Cromarty. Can you arrange for him to run up here for a day?"

Simon stared at him hard, and there seemed to be even more caution than usual in his eye—almost, indeed, a touch of suspicion. The lawyer was not looking quite as well as usual; there was a drawn look about the upper part of the face and a hint of strain both in eyes and mouth.

"Why do you want to see Sir Malcolm?" he inquired.

"Well," said Carrington, "the fact of the matter is, Mr Rattar, that, as you yourself said, the direct evidence is practically nil, and one is forced to go a good deal by one's judgment of the people suspected or concerned."

Simon grunted sceptically.

"Very misleading," he said.

"That depends entirely on one's judgment, or rather on one's instinct for distinguishing bad eggs from good. As a matter of observation, I don't find that certain types of men and women commit certain actions, and I do find that they are apt to commit others. And contrariwise with other types."

"Very unsafe doctrine," said Simon emphatically.

"Extremely—in the hands of any one who doesn't know how to apply it. On the other hand, it can be made a short and common-sense cut to the truth in many cases. For instance, the man who suspected Mr Bisset of committing the crime would simply be wasting his time and energy, even if there seemed to be some evidence against him."

"Any man can commit any crime," said Simon dogmatically.

Carrington smiled and shook his head.

"Personally," said he, "if you had a young and pretty wife, I am capable of running away with her, and possibly even of letting her persuade me to abscond with some of your property, but I am not capable of laying you out in cold blood and rifling that safe. And a good judge of men ought to be able to perceive this and not waste his time in trying to convict me of an offence I couldn't commit. On the other hand, if the crime was one that my type is apt to commit, he would be a fool to acquit me off-hand, even if there was next to no evidence against me."

"Then you simply go by your impressions of people?"

"Far from it. A complete absence of motive would force me to acquit even the most promising-looking blackguard, unless of course there was some form of lunacy in his case. One must have motive and one must have evidence as well, but character is the short cut—if the circumstances permit you to use it. Sometimes, of course, they don't; but in this case they force me to depend on it very largely. Therefore, I want to see Sir Malcolm Cromarty."

The lawyer shook his head.

"No, no, Mr Carrington,"

he said, "I can't bring him down here on such trivial grounds."

"But you yourself suspect him!"

For a moment the lawyer was silent.

"I think suspicion points to him, but what is wanted is *evidence*. You can't get evidence merely by bringing him here. You don't suppose he will confess, do you?"

"Have you ever studied the French methods of getting at the truth?" inquired Carrington, and when Simon shook his head contemptuously, he added with some significance, "We can learn a good deal from our neighbours."

"Trivial grounds!" muttered Simon. "No, no!"

Carrington became unusually serious and impressive.

"I am investigating this case, Mr Rattar, and I want to see Sir Malcolm. Will you send for him or not?"

"He wouldn't come."

"It depends on the urgency of the message."

"I can't invent bogus urgent messages to my clients."

Carrington smiled.

"I might do the inventing for you."

Again the lawyer stared at him, and again there was the same extreme caution in his eye, mingled with a hint of suspicion.

"I'll think about it," he said.

"I want to see him immediately."

"Call again to-morrow morning."

Carrington's manner altered at once into his usual easy-going air.

"Very well then, Mr Rattar," said he as he rose.

"By the way," said Simon, "you have been out at Keldale this morning, I presume?"

"Yes," said Carrington carelessly, "but there is really nothing new to be found."

Simon looked at him hard.

"No fresh evidence?"

Carrington laughed.

"Not likely, after you and your sleuth-hounds had been over the ground!"

He went to the door, and there Simon again spoke.

"What are you doing next?"

"Upon my word, I am rather wondering. I must think about it. Good-morning."

For a man who was rather wondering, Mr Carrington's next movements were remarkably prompt. He first went straight to the Post Office and despatched a wire. It was addressed to Sir Malcolm Cromarty, and it ran: "Come immediately — urgent news — don't answer — please don't delay." The only thing that seemed to indicate a wondering and abstracted mind was the signature to this message. Instead of "Carrington" he actually wrote "Cicely Farmond."

He then hurried to the hotel, which he reached at 1.50. In ten minutes he had bolted a hasty lunch, and at two o'clock was sitting in the car again.

"To Stanesland Castle," he commanded. "And be as quick as you can."

XXVI. AT STANESLAND.

Mr Carrington's interview with the laird of Stanesland began on much the same lines as his talk with Bisset. The amiable visitor was shewn into the laird's smoking-room—an apartment with vast walls like a dungeon, and on them trophies from the laird's adventurous days—and proceeded to make inquiry whether Mr Cromarty was disposed to let his shootings for next season, or, if not, whether he could recommend any others.

As the visitor was in no hurry, he declared, to fix anything up, it was very natural that this conversation, like the morning's, should eventually turn on to the subject of the great local mystery. Through it all Mr Carrington's monocle was more continually fixed on the other than usual; but if he were looking for peculiarities in the laird's manner or any admissions made either by tongue or eye, he was disappointed. Cromarty was as breezy and as direct as ever; but even when his visitor confessed his extreme interest in such cases of remarkable crime, he (to all seeming) scented nothing in this beyond a not uncommon hobby. There was no doubt, however, of his keenness to discuss the subject. Carrington gave him an entertaining account of his efforts to assist Mr Bisset, and then Ned asked—

"Well, what do you think of this theory that the man came in by the window?"

Carrington smiled.

"Bisset is evidently extremely anxious to save the credit of the family."

Ned Cromarty was roused now.

"Good God!" he cried. "But do you mean to say that you think that story will hold water?"

"What story?" inquired Carrington mildly.

"You know what I mean—the scandal that Sir Malcolm and—and a lady were concerned in the murder."

"They are said to have actually committed it, aren't they?"

Ned's eye began to look dangerous.

"Do you think it's credible?" he asked brusquely.

"You know them better than I. Do you think it is?"

"Not for an instant!"

"I haven't met Sir Malcolm," said Carrington, wiping his eyeglass on his handkerchief. "I can't judge of him. What sort of a fellow is he?"

"A bit of a young squirt," said Ned candidly, "but I'll not believe he's a murderer till I get some proof of it."

"And Miss Farmond? Is she at all a murderous lady?"

He fixed his monocle in his eye just in time to see his host control himself after what seemed to have been a somewhat violent spasm.

"I'll stake my life on her innocence!" said Ned, and it was hard to know whether his

manner as he said this should be termed fierce or solemn.

For the space of perhaps two seconds Carrington's eyeglass stared very straight at him, and immediately afterwards was taken out for cleaning again, while its owner seemed to have found some new food for thought. The silence was broken by Ned asking brusquely—

"Don't you believe me?"

Again his visitor fixed the monocle in his eye, and he answered now very quietly and deliberately—

"I happened to meet a young lady one afternoon, whom I discovered to be Miss Farmond. My own impression—for what it is worth—is that it would be mere waste of time to investigate the suspicion against her, supposing, that is, that one were a detective or anything of that kind engaged in this case."

"You think she is innocent?" asked Ned eagerly.

"I am quite certain of it, so far as I am any judge."

Ned heaved a sigh of relief, and for an instant a smile flitted across Carrington's face. It seemed as though he were amused at such a tribute to the opinion of a mere chance visitor.

"And Sir Malcolm?" inquired Ned.

Carrington shook his head.

"I have no means of judging—yet."

Ned glanced at him quickly.

"Do you expect to get hold of a means?"

Carrington's smile was his only answer to the question. And then, still smiling, he said—

"I rather wonder, Mr Cromarty, that you who have taken so much interest in this case, and who are, I am told, the head of the family, don't get some professional assistance to help you to get at the bottom of it."

Ned's mouth shut hard and his eyes turned to the fire. He said nothing for a moment, and then remarked—

"Well, I guess that's worth thinking over."

Carrington's shoulders moved in an almost imperceptible shrug, but he made no comment aloud. In a moment Ned said—

"Supposing those two are scored out, there doesn't seem to be anybody else inside the house who could have committed the crime, does there? You wouldn't suspect Lady Cromarty or Bisset, would you?"

"Lady Cromarty is physically incapable of giving her husband the blow he must have received. Besides, they were a very devoted couple, I understand; and she gained nothing by his death—lost heavily, in fact. As for Bisset!"—Carrington let his smile finish the sentence.

"Then it must have been some one from outside—but who?"

"Can you think of any one?" asked Carrington.

Ned shook his head emphatically.

"Can you?" he asked.

"Me?" said his visitor with an innocent air, and yet with a

twinkle for an instant in his eye. "I am a mere stranger to the place, and if you and Mr Rattar and the police are baffled, what can I suggest?"

Ned seemed for a moment a trifle disconcerted. Then he said—

"That's so, of course, Mr Carrington. But since we happen to be talking about it—well, I guess I'm quite curious to know if any ideas have just happened to occur to you."

"Well," said the other, "between ourselves, Mr Cromarty, and speaking quite confidentially, one idea has struck me very forcibly."

"What's that?" asked Ned eagerly.

"Simply this, that though it *might* be conceivable to think of somebody or other, the difficulty that stares me in the face is—motive!"

Ned's face fell.

"Well, that's what has struck all of us."

"Sir Reginald was a popular landlord, I hear."

"The most popular in the county."

"This isn't Ireland," continued Carrington. "Tenants don't lay out their landlords on principle, and in this particular instance they would simply stand to lose by his death. Then take his tradesmen and his agent and so on, they all stand to lose too. An illicit love affair and a vengeful swain might be a conceivable theory, if his character gave colour to it; but there's not a hint of that, and some rumour would have got about for certain if that had been the case."

"You may dismiss that," said Ned emphatically.

"Then there you are—what's the motive?"

"If one could think of a possible man, one could probably think of a possible motive."

On Carrington's face a curious look appeared for an instant.

"I only wish one could," he murmured.

A gong sounded and Ned rose.

"That means tea," said he. "I always have it in my sister's room. Come up."

They went up the stone stair and turned into Miss Cromarty's boudoir. On her Mr Carrington produced a favourable impression that was evident at once. At all times she liked good-looking and agreeable gentlemen, and lately she had been suffering from a dearth of them. She had been suffering also from her brother's pig-headed refusal to reconsider his decision not to buy a car; and finally, from the lack of some one to sympathise with her in this matter. In the opulent-looking and sportingly-attired Mr Carrington she quickly perceived a kindred spirit, and having a tongue that was not easily intimidated even by the formidable-looking laird, she lauched into her grievance. They had been talking about the long distances that separated most of the mansions in the county.

"Isn't it ridiculous, Mr Car-

rington," said she, "we haven't got a car!"

"Absurd," agreed Mr Carrington, helping himself to cake.

"Do you know, this brother of mine here has actually come into a fortune, and yet he won't even buy me a motor-car!"

Ned frowned and muttered something that might have checked their visitor's reply had he noticed the laird's displeasure, but for the moment he seemed to have become very unobserving.

"Come into a fortune?" said he. "What a bit of luck! How much—a million—two million?"

"Oh, not so much as that, worse luck? But quite enough to buy at least three decent cars if he was half a sportsman! And he won't get one!"

Mr Carrington was now trying to balance his cake in his saucer, and was evidently too absorbed in his efforts to notice his host's waxing displeasure.

"In my experience," said he, "you can't get a decent car much under four hundred."

"Well," said she, "that's just the figure it would bring it to."

"Lilian!" muttered her brother wrathfully.

But at that moment Mr Carrington coughed, evidently over a cake crumb, and failed to hear the expostulation.

"But perhaps he is going to buy you something even handsomer instead," he suggested.

"Is he!" she scoffed, with a defiant eye on her brother. "I believe he's going to blue it in something too scandalous to talk about in mixed society! Anyhow, it's something too mysterious to tell me!"

By this time Ned's face was a thundercloud in which lightning was clearly imminent, but Mr Carrington now recovered his wonted tact as suddenly as he had lost it.

"That reminds me of a very curious story I heard at my club the other day," he began, and in a few minutes the conversation was far away from Miss Cromarty's grievances. And then, having finished his cup of tea, he looked at his watch with an exclamation, and protested that he must depart on the instant.

As he lay back in his car he murmured with a satisfied smile—

"That's settled anyhow!"

And then for the whole drive home he fell very thoughtful indeed. Only one incident aroused him, and that but for a moment. It was quite dark by this time, and somewhere between the Keldale House lodge and the town the lamps of the car swept for an instant over a girl riding a bicycle in the opposite direction. Carrington looked round quickly and saw that she was Miss Cicely Farmond.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE BALTIC COAST TO THE DENMARK BORDER.

I. THE SETTING.

THE officers' lager at Stralsund lay on an island—or rather on a twin pair of islands called Greater and Smaller Danholm—and separated from the mainland by a narrow strip of water over which a permanent ferry plies to and fro. On the farther side of these islands, and separated from them again by a wider channel—perhaps two-thirds of the width of the Solent at its narrowest point—lie the pleasant shores of Rugen. The blue sea and the wooded slopes of this fair island recalled to the homesick prisoner the beauties of her smaller sister of the Wight.

Hither came in the summer of 1918 500 odd hungry British officers—the unwilling guests of his then Imperial Majesty Wilhelm II. They were a not inconsiderable part of the many taken in the three gigantic German offensives between March 21st and May 27th. They came in big batches from the sorting-out camps of Rastatt and Karlsruhe—the former place a memory that will endure for their lives with those who were there—or in little driblets from the hospitals from whence they had been discharged.

Hither came also in September 200 officers from Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle), the last of their illusions gone. They had been sent from various camps to that place, the stepping-stone for internment and happier things. They had stayed there two months. Their parcels, which should have been forwarded to them, went persistently "west." In many cases even their luggage had gone to Holland. They had been taken for walks, and had viewed the promised land.

And now, at the eleventh hour, the congestion of sick at Aachen had necessitated their removal, and they had been side-tracked to the Baltic—to wait and wait, and begin the dreary round again. They moved our sympathy. They had had two and a half years of it, and now they had as little to eat as, and not much more to wear than, the new arrivals. But one of them had a typewriter.

And hither came also a little party of three from Holzminden Camp in Brunswick, a delightful specimen of the systematic repression and exploitation practised on prisoners of war in the Xth Army Corps. Things had been humming, too, at H. lately. One night twenty-nine had disappeared; the authorities, particularly the odious Commandant, Captain Niemeyer, were at first staggered, then brutal to the remainder. Checkmated after many months of boastful confidence, he began to have escaping very badly on the brain.

Part of the programme was evidently to remove all suspected officers to securer fastnesses; and so, one morning, Major Gilbert, Lieut. Ortweiler, and myself were told we had an hour and a half to pack. We packed and went.

Stralsund was like a rest cure.

It is indeed a pleasant spot. A channel, narrow at the entrances, broadening to ninety yards in the middle, divides the islands. Standing on the bridge which spans the channel at its narrowest, one looks west to Stralsund town. Whether with the setting sun behind it or the morning sun full on it, it is beautiful. Venice viewed from the sea can hardly be fairer. The dome of the Marianne Kirche dominates the town, and the bat-coloured sails of the fishing vessels can be just seen, with an occasional motor-boat, moving in the blue Sound. In Great Danholm the chestnuts are magnificent. There is one avenue of trees which meet each other overhead as in a cathedral nave. And there was one little segregated fenced-off spot which for no particular reason we called King Henry VIIIth's Garden. The name seemed to suit. One could take half an hour walking round the camp.

But it is not my intention, by painting too glowing a picture, to alienate my reader's sympathy. The place was good, but German. The buildings were good, but had held Russians. The air was good, but there were smells. We had been long-time prisoners —veterans we considered ourselves in this horde of "eighteeners." And it would be cold, very cold in winter.

We had a fortnight's holiday, revelling in the unexpected beauty, the much less uncomfortable beds, and the extra sheet; the open-air sea bath in the mornings; the freedom and scope of movement; the almost latent wire; the inoffensiveness of the German personnel; the unobtrusiveness of the Commandant; the beer—liquorice—but still beer of a sort; the exchange of news with the new prisoners, and the picking up of old threads; the sight of the sea from our landing window; the games on real grass. . . .

And then, in quite a different sense, we began looking round.

We learned that the authorities were quietly and politely confident that the place was escape-proof. They expected attempts. Oh, yes! "We know it is your duty. We should do it ourselves." And conventionalities of the sort that are common when German officers of a decent type —and there were such on this island—find themselves in conversation with Englishmen. "But it cannot be done—no one has ever escaped from here. True, it might be easy to cut the wire and get on to the main part of the island, but we have our dogs. If you swim to the mainland you will be recognised and brought back. Even if you get across

to Rugen you have to get off it, and you would be missed. We have our seaplane to scour the sea. The ferry is guarded. . . ." And so on.

Subsequent events appeared to justify this view. Attempts were made, and failed in quick succession. In each case the objective was the same, though aimed at by different methods —the open sea and the Danish island of Bornholm or Danish territory elsewhere. Two officers — yachtsmen born — cut the wire one night, swam out towards Rugen, boarded an empty fishing vessel about 200 yards out, and got clean away. They stranded off the north-west corner of Rugen, and were recaptured. Three others commandeered a boat which had been left unpadlocked in the channel, rowed to the mainland, and separated. Two were recaptured immediately, the third was at large some days and was eventually arrested some way down the coast. I did not learn his story. Another party of three attempted to paddle over to Rugen on a cattle trough. They selected a stormy night, were upset fifty yards out of the channel, and got back unobserved with difficulty, and, as one of them could not swim, rather luckily.

So far as the German precautions went, the net upshot of these attempts was that stringent orders were issued about leaving boats in the channel or on the shores of the island unpadlocked. For the rest the Commandant was satisfied with his second line of defence, the water, which was, moreover (it was now mid-September), growing daily colder and more unattractive.

II. PREPARATION.

Such was the position when the Holzminden trio began to put their heads together. I do not think any of us seriously entertained the idea of an escape by water. We were all hopeless landsmen, and Gilbert at any rate could not swim. A "stunt" by sea necessitated a combination of luck, pluck, opportunism, and, above all, watermanship. Our armament, such as it was, was of a different kind. We all knew German, Gilbert and I indifferently, Ortweiler fluently. We had the wherewithal to bribe. We could lay our hands on a typewriter. We knew the ropes of a land journey by railway. Gilbert and Ortweiler had both been "out," the latter more than once. And I had heard these things much discussed. Moreover, Gilbert being a Major, had secured a small room, which he invited me to share, and Ortweiler was a member of our mess. In a deep-laid scheme privacy is almost an essential. Greatest asset of all, the Germans were not suspicious, and they left us alone.

Our idea—very much in the

rough—crystallised as follows: Together or separately, as events might dictate, to bluff the sentry at the main gate and at the ferry, to get on to the mainland and there travel by train to the Holland frontier, and to have our preparations so thoroughly made that on paper at least our plan was bound to be successful.

Our first plan was to co-opt three or four others and go out as a party of orderlies, with one of us disguised as a German sentry in charge. Individual officers had on several occasions already been into the town with a party of orderlies on some "fatigue" or other in order to have a look round. Our idea was to concoct some imaginary fatigue which would take us not only into the town but out of it, where we should have an opportunity of assuming our real disguise and separating on our respective routes. We got so far as to fashion out our bogus rifle in the rough, but before long we discarded the whole idea for various reasons. The rifle would be too difficult to imitate to pass in broad daylight. We could not be certain of securing the uniform of our sentry; all the sentries on duty in the camp were likely to be personally known to one another. Difficulties of taking our disguise with us, difficulties of hitting on the right sort of "fatigue" to disarm suspicion . . . the "cons" had it emphatically.

Moreover, in the interval the looked-for "key" had presented itself. The two others had succeeded in removing a workman's "permit" from his coat pocket while he was working in the camp. This "permit" entitled the civilian in question to visit the camp and its environs between given dates, name and business being duly stated, and the permit signed by the Camp Commandant. Printed in German print on a plain white card, it appeared not impossible of exact imitation. Our hopes were more than fulfilled. Lieutenant Lockhead, one of the party weatherbound *en route* for a neutral country, had, we knew, performed yeoman service in this line when at Holzminden. We showed him the card. Within two days he had accomplished an exact replica, including the signature, so good as to be undistinguishable from the original. Our hopes arose.

It remained to complete the rest of our essential equipment—civilian clothes, German money, forged passports, maps, and compasses. With the two former I was entirely unprovided. One passport, forged on an old model, was in Gilbert's possession, but we doubted its efficacy in northern Germany. The two latter articles I was content to leave to the last moment, when I should have definitely decided on my route. One had the feeling that it was absurd to spend hours on acquiring articles necessary only for the last lap, when one might be stopped at the gate: a curiously illogical process of reasoning, as these things—

or at least one of them—are indispensable for even a short journey across country, . . . but there it was.

It was at this point that the event occurred which led me definitely to abandon my Holland scheme and decide for the Danish border. A German private soldier came into our room one day to do some work. He was in uniform, but was on leave in Stralsund, which was his home, and in the then prevailing shortage of labour he was lending a hand to his erstwhile master.

No "escapee" ever omits a chance—provided he can speak German at all—of profiting by a conversation with some one from outside the camp. Indeed this was so well known to the authorities that in most camps anybody coming in from outside was escorted by a sentry, and not left alone during the period of his stay in the camp. Stralsund was an exception—possibly because the English had been there so short a time, possibly because of the Commandant's complacent idea as to its security. Be that as it may, I had this fellow fairly quickly sized up. It turned out his job was doing sentry on the Denmark border.

"Is it dull there?"

"Frightfully."

"Do many get over up there?"

"Oh, yes!"

"What? Prisoners?"

"A few—but smugglers and deserters mostly. We pretend not to see them."

Here was an eye-opener! I threw caution to the winds and found that I had not mistaken my man. He was a genial rascal, venal and disloyal to the core. Before he had been in that room half an hour he had committed himself far too deeply in the eyes of the German Law for me to have any fear that he would turn round and blow the gaff on *us*. He told us (Gilbert had come in by that time) of a slackly guarded frontier, with wire so low that you could walk over it: of the exact route from Stralsund to the last station outside the *Grenz-Gebiet* (border territory): of the innocuous passage of an ordinary *Personal-Zug* (slow train) without the complications of passport-checking or examination when crossing over the dreaded Kiel Canal. He came in next day with some civilian collars and ties and an inadequate railway map, and on each day he went out the heavier by sundry woollen and flannel clothes, cigarettes, soap, chocolate, and cheese. He gave me in return about 30 marks in German money. He had promised to do even more, but he made some excuse that his leave was up, and we saw him no more. Probably he funked it. Viewed as a commercial deal the balance was in his favour; but he had given us information that was beyond rubies. Our hopes rose higher, and by this time Gilbert and I were more or less definitely committed to the Denmark scheme.

We had not long to wait for an opportunity of seeing how

our passports should read. I will say no more. Even at this distance of time, immeasurably magnified by the intervening events, there still may lurk the long arm in German Law, and we need not doubt that there are still too many souls in Germany attracted by the thought, *Wie soll ich Detective werden?* (How shall I become a detective?) to make it altogether safe for these concerned if I were to be more explicit in print. Suffice it to say that our tools were of tender years, cheaply bought, and therefore on both accounts the less deserving of retribution.

I had sold my field service ration boots for 45 marks, through the agency of Ortweiler. I must not mention in what market. I had therefore collected about 75 marks, and this was, of course, ample for my requirements. I was all the time anxiously on the look-out for civilian clothes. I had got a pair of old blue trousers from Captain Clarke of the Merchant Marine. I had an old pair of ration "Tommy" boots, which, on comparison with the home-grown article, I decided might just "do." I had shirt, collar, and tie. I wanted hat, coat, and—in view of the lateness of the season—some sort of overcoat.

By great good luck the hat, or, as it happened, cap, materialised. A new naval suit with cap had arrived for a merchant skipper who had gone to Aachen for a medical board in the hope of exchange. As soon as we heard he had been passed and gone over the border, Gilbert and I promptly closed for the suit, of which we had secured the refusal with his *chargé d'affaires*. Shorn of its buttons the suit made a smart civilian costume for Gilbert, and shorn of its badge the cap became merely the naval type of headgear so common amongst German boys or men of the working class. I had always decided I would shape my *rôle* according to the clothes which I could find, and I now decided that I should travel 4th class as some sort of mechanic. For a coat I had to fall back upon a brand-new English coat sent out from home, and confiscated by and re-stolen later by us from the Germans. I made it as shabby as I could in the short time at my disposal, but even so it was far too smart to pass for my class of "character" except at night. I therefore decided that if travelling by day I would wear over my coat a very old dark-blue naval raincoat which had been given me. I was thus equipped.

I might possibly have done better if I had waited, but the completion of my arrangements had to synchronise as far as possible with that of the others. I had also been able to copy a fairly good map of Northern Schleswig showing roads and railways, and, by great good luck and at the eleventh hour, I secured what I believe was the last compass but one in the whole camp. The shortage of these articles seemed extraordinary, when one reflected on the abundance of them in

most of the old camps of longer standing. To the donor on this occasion, Colonel G. E. Hill, D.S.O., of the East Lancs., the senior officer of the camp, I am eternally indebted, as I could not have managed very well without it.

From one of the camp personnel I had elucidated the fact that the Hamburg train went at 6.40 in the morning. From another source we heard there was also a train at 6.43 in the evening.

Gilbert meanwhile had been busy with the typewriter, which he had secured with great forethought from its owner in the Aachen party. The *Ausweis* forms were completed, each according to our particular "specifications."

Mine ran as follows:—

Personal Ausweis fur Karl Stein aus Stralsund. } on the outside;

and on the inside—on the left-hand side—my photograph. I had been photographed in this very camp by the Germans, and I had been wearing at the time an old Indian volunteer tunic, which in the photograph looked much like a German tunic. This was pure chance and very lucky.

On the right side, my particulars:—

KARL STEIN.

Place of birth	Stralsund.	*Height*	1·60 metres.
State belonging to	Prussian.	*Eyes*	Brown.
Date of birth	4/6/1880.	*Hair*	Brown.
Chin	Ordinary.	*Beard*	Moustache.
Mouth	Ordinary.		
Nose	Large.		
Particular marks	None.		

Authentic Signature: KARL STEIN.
(A very lame and halting hand this.)

"Herewith certified that the owner of the pass has subscribed his name with his own hand."
(Signed) LIEUTENANT OF POLICE—STRALSUND.

The stamps affixed to the passport—two on the photograph, one on the right-hand side—were an amazingly clever imitation by Lockhead (the friend who had already helped us with the forging of the permit-cards). He did these stamps by hand through some purple carbon paper that I still had with me from an old army message-form book—and to be believed, they must be seen.

Gilbert took infinite trouble with the filling up of these passports. He had acquired a good, flowing, German hand, and he filled the particulars in himself, with a flourish for the signature of the Police *Leutnant* at the bottom. He also filled in the permit-cards. We had each two passports, one made out as from Stralsund, and the other as from Schleswig. We should naturally show the Stralsund one in the Schleswig territory and *vice versâ*.

We were now ready, or as ready as any one is until the actual time comes to go, when there are always a thousand and one things to be thought of.

III. THE ESCAPE.

It was arranged amongst ourselves that Ortweiler should have the first shot, as he stood easily the best chance of effecting escape. Accordingly, on Monday the 14th October, he made his exit. He was well made up with a false moustache stuck on with some very diluted form of spirit gum, and fiercely curved at the tips. It was only tow, but it served its purpose in the dark. Our duty was to patrol the avenue leading to the main gate, between 5 and 6.30 P.M., to mark down what dangerous Germans had left the camp, and to stop Ortweiler if any one who was likely to suspect him hove in sight.

I should mention here that from the barrack selected as dressing-room to the main gate is about 200 yards. From the main gate on to the ferry is another 350 yards. After dark at this time of year various Germans living in the town were likely to be leaving the island for the night, and the ferry was thus constantly on the move. Our object was primarily to avoid the more dangerous Germans—*e.g.*, an officer or the Interpreter, who knew us all well by sight.

All went well. I gave the signal "all clear" at about 6.30, and G. and I piloted him out, slowing down as he passed us 40 yards from the main gate. We saw him take out his card and hand it to the sentry, who then let him through the postern. It had worked! We breathed a sigh of relief. Just as we were going back, we met the Interpreter homeward bound for the ferry. He was too close behind O. to be exactly safe, so I engaged him in conversation. He was in a hurry, and I could only think of something rather fatuous to say, but I held him up a minute or two, and that may have caused him to miss O.'s particular boat. (*P.S.* — I have since heard that they went over the ferry together!)

We "cooked" O.'s "appell" at 8 P.M. This is a familiar device for concealing escape. The result was that the barrack *Feldwebel* did not report his absence till next day at 9 A.M. roll-call. He had thus twelve hours' clear start, by which time he was most of the way to Berlin. We thought him almost a certainty to "get over" with his fluent knowledge of German, and he did, in point of fact, escape into Holland *vid* Berlin, Frankfort, and Crefeld.

Gilbert and I were naturally elated, the more so as from inquiries it transpired that the authorities had absolutely no suspicion of how O. had got out. Owing to repeated wire-cutting and escapes into the island the guard had been increased and placed outside the wire. No one had passed the sentries who had not the proper credentials. Of that they were quite convinced. It was believed that O. was still hiding in the camp. We hugged ourselves.

Friday of that week, the 18th, the day selected as "Der Tag," was an unforgettable one. Our kit had to be packed and labelled, final arrangements made about feeding in the event of recapture; compromising documents of any sort had to be destroyed; at the last moment I realised that I had no braces, no German cigarettes, and no matches. To crown all, there was a barrack hockey match which we could not very well avoid.

During the day it so happened that we were twice invaded by *Feldwebels*. On the first occasion the door was locked, and we had to throw a map into the corner and then open it, an action which would in itself have been of damning suspicion in most camps.

On the second the *Feldwebel* found G. cutting sandwiches of German *Kriegs Brot*. G. had to explain that it was a new attempt to make *Kriegs Brot* (war bread) palatable, and invited the *Feldwebel* to come and see the result at dinner time. Doubtless he came, but there were no sandwiches and no us. At four P.M. we had our high tea, four Copenhagen eggs each, and tea and jam. At 5 P.M. the roll was called, and immediately after it we started transferring our disguise under cover of the growing darkness to the barrack from which we were going to make our final exit.

It had been arranged after some discussion that Gilbert should leave not before dark, and not later than 6, and that I should give him ten minutes clear before following. This would give me little time to catch the 6.42 P.M. train to Hamburg if I was at all held up, a forecast which was verified by events; but there was no help for it. It was necessary that Gilbert's disguise should be assisted to the full by darkness.

We had let a few friends into the secret, and these were cruising about like destroyers up and down the avenue, reporting the departure of dangerous Germans. G. did not eventually get off much before 6, and it seemed a long time before the leader of the convoy reported that he was safely through the gate. I gave him ten minutes, conscious mainly of the fact that I had forgotten any German I had ever learnt, and then stepped forth.

I was Karl Stein, firm of Karl Stein & Co., Furniture Dealers, Langestrasse, Stralsund. I had been into the Commandatur to arrange about a new contract for officers' cupboards. I knew the shop, because I had seen it the day before when I went to the town hospital under escort with a party of officers for massage. I needed no massage, of course, but had only done this to acquaint myself with the geography of the town.

With a blank stare I passed several brother officers walking up and down the avenue, and reached the gate. My great

moment had come, but the sentry simply looked at my card carefully, said *schön* (good), and handed it back. I walked very fast down to the ferry. There was no boat on my side, and I saw I should have to wait some minutes. The sentry at the ferry examined my card and handed it back. How should I avoid the two Germans who were already there on the jetty waiting for the boat? I decided to have a violent fit of coughing.

I must here mention that my knowledge of German, acquired during captivity, was not such as would enable me to support a cross-examination of more than a minute or two. I had, however, practised the "pure" German accent with assiduity. In point of fact, I hardly spoke a hundred words on the journey, and some of these were not absolutely necessary.

At last the ferry-boat came over, empty. I got in and sat in the bows. There was an English orderly working the bow oar. I had seen him the previous day. I kicked him, and he realised what I was, and shielded me as much as he could from the other occupants of the boat, which was now gradually filling. It was a long five minutes, and I continued my violent fit of coughing, leaning over the side as if in a paroxysm. There were two Germans in the bows, and one of them touched me on the shoulder and suggested that I should trim the boat by sitting in the middle. I complied meekly, feeling really very wretched indeed.

At the last I thought I was really done for. The German adjutant got into the boat. He didn't know me by sight, but I thought it was more than likely that he would suspect me. Mercifully he began to talk to some lady typists from the camp, who had just preceded him.

We shoved off eventually, almost full. I continued coughing till we got across. When the boat discharged I went ashore almost last. I gave them a wide berth in front, and as soon as I was clear made off at my best pace for the station. Now I was Karl Stein of Schleswig, carpenter, ex-army man, and recalled for civilian employment, catching the train for his native country. I tore up my "permit" and dropped it in the road. One month off my sentence anyway. . . .

As I expected, I just missed the train. I had no watch, but the clock on the *Marianne Kirche* showed me I should be late. I reached the station about 6.50; it was rather full of people. I wondered if G. was away in that train, . . . and then, vaguely, what the chances were of my being nabbed before the next went. This, I noted, was at 5.40 the next morning (Sunday). I think if there had been any outgoing trains that night I should have taken them, even though they led me east instead of west. But as it happened there were none. I

went into the men's lavatory in the station, shut myself in a closet, and reflected. I thought at that time to my horror that I had forgotten my matches, so I denied myself a smoke. My matches turned up later, and I needed what few there were. I solaced myself with a slab of chocolate.

The position was not encouraging. Our information about trains was correct. Our friends would not be able to camouflage our absence, which would certainly be discovered by 8 P.M., reported by 9 P.M. It was more than likely that they would telephone to the station. I determined not to be in the station at all between 9 and 12. If I was arrested next morning, I was. In the meantime it was good to be free.

It was a beautiful October night in Stralsund. I braced myself up and begged a light for a cigarette from a youngster at a street corner, and then strolled along the streets that led from the station to the *Kirche*. I knew these now quite well enough not to get lost. I sat on a bench and looked across the moonlit water, which, near the station, runs right in in a broad and lovely sweep. I lit a pipe from my German cigarette and smoked comfortably. Should I get off next morning? . . .

I was cooling down now, and wandered past the *Marianne Kirche* to a cinema in the *Langestrasse*. A boy there told me the booking-office was shut. I wandered round and round till one o'clock. I sat for a long time on my old bench overlooking the water; at another place I entered a private garden and sheltered for an hour under a wall right on the water's edge. It was blowing fairly fresh.

About one o'clock I returned to the station and entered the waiting-room, full of recumbent figures, mostly soldiers and sailors. I got hold of two chairs and tried to sleep. There was a sailor on the other side of the table.

At four o'clock I got up and had a cup of coffee. The waiting-room was now fairly full of people, most of them presumably going by my train.

I had by now a two days' growth of beard, and my moustache was fairly long and well down over the corners of my mouth. Moreover, I had had a fairly sleepless night.

In my pockets I carried three large sandwiches of German bread with English potted meat inside; about twenty slabs of Caley's marching chocolate; a box of Horlick's milk tablets; a spare pair of socks; some rag and vaseline; my pipe and tobacco; English and German cigarettes; my compass, money, and papers. I had an old German novel in my hands which I pretended to read with great assiduity. Half an hour before the train was due to start I went to the booking-office. I was surprised to hear my own voice. "Fourth to Hamburg, please." I had no idea what it cost, so I tendered a 20-mark note. The

ticket cost only seven marks! I went back to the waiting-room, and a few minutes later faced the barrier. No questions, no suspicion. I breathed again and wondered what that Commandant had done. Wired to Rostock perhaps. . . .

My carriage was not overfull at the start: four or five women and two elderly men. I had no trouble with them. Their conversation began and maintained itself exclusively about food, but they were cheerful enough.

Before Rostock the carriage had filled up, and I with British politeness was strap-hanging. An old woman began asking me to shift her *korb* (basket). I could not exactly understand what she wanted, and must have looked rather foolish. However, I did the right thing eventually.

We changed at Rostock. I was half expecting trouble, but nothing happened. A porter told me the platform for the Hamburg train. I got this stereotyped question fairly pat.

To Hamburg the train was overflowing. We were over forty in a tiny compartment. I was wedged in against the window, strap-hanging. At one intermediate station a young soldier got in with a goose hanging out of his haversack. He immediately became the centre of an admiring throng. He was a genial youth and bandied repartee with all and sundry. I could not catch his sallies, which were in Low German, and greeted with roars of laughter. I suppose he was the son of some farmer, and had "wangled" this goose, which would probably have fetched 150 marks in the market, to take back to his messmates. He got out just before Hamburg. I could not have asked for a better foil.

Hamburg! I had never hoped for even so long a run as this. Was there really a chance? . . . In any case, I was now well clear of the Stralsund zone. I began to realise that the heavy week-end traffic was helping me, and that I was indeed no more than a needle in a haystack. I ate a sandwich and an apple which I had bought at Lubeck.

We ran into the big station at about 2.40 in the afternoon. It was very full. It did not take me long to find the "departure" notices, *Kiel* 3.10. I took my place in the queue for the 4th-class booking-office. Behind me two women had an altercation as to priority of place in the queue. I was rather afraid they were going to appeal to me. I had no wish for the *rôle* of Solomon at that moment.

I booked direct to Flensburg —about four marks' worth— and made my way downstairs to the departure platform, which was indicated clearly enough. I did not like the odd quarter of an hour which I had to wait before the train came in. I was not very happy about my dark-blue waterproof. I could not see anything approaching its counterpart. If one stands still, one can be examined at leisure; if

one moves up and down, one runs the gauntlet of a hundred restless eyes, any one pair of which may at some previous date have had first-hand cognisance of a typical naval rubber-lined English waterproof. . . .

Then I blundered. There was a coffee stall on the platform. I went up to it and asked for a cup. I had drunk nothing since 4 o'clock in the morning. Fortunately, neither of the *fräulein* in the stall paid any attention to me. Just then I saw the notice, "for soldiers and sailors only," printed up in big letters. I should have known that, but no one had noticed anything.

When *would* that train come in?

It came at last. I chose the carriage with fewest soldiers in it, and most women, and made for my strategical position by the window. But it was impossible to avoid men altogether. I had one strap-hanging next to me from Hamburg to Kiel. Everybody started chattering at once. How could I keep out of this all the way to Kiel without suspicion? Of course, they were talking about food,—various ways of dishing up potatoes.

I looked out of the window, pretending to be interested in the country. It was impossible even to pretend to read in that crush. A man on the seat was forcibly expressing his views to two *fräulein* on the new (tenth) War Loan. They giggled.

I often wonder if those Hamburg folk then had any notion that another fortnight would see the Red Flag floating in their midst.

At Neumunster we had an invasion. The carriage, full already, became packed. Four girls of the farmer class—sisters I judged them—got in at my window. I lost my place of vantage and was relegated to the middle of the floor. I felt a pasty-faced youth quite close to me sizing me up.

Fortunately the farmer girls riveted all attention for half a dozen stations. They were in boisterous spirits and screamed with laughter at their own jokes. They spoke dialect and I could not understand them, but I grinned feebly in unison. When they got out, I recovered my post by the window. Bless them, anyway, for a diversion.

At the next station an elderly man who was sitting on a basket immediately in front of me said something to me directly. He was not in any way a formidable character, but he spoke villainous dialect and I could not make head or tail of his question. He was referring to something in the station. I said "*ja*," and looked out of the window in a knowing way. But I could not risk a second question. I felt the pasty-faced youth's eyes on me again, and I made a bee-line for the lavatory. When I emerged I took up a fresh position.

The train was emptying as we approached Kiel, and for a time I got my head out of

the window and enjoyed the draught. Then a little girl standing by me asked me to pull up the window again. I had my second sandwich.

We ran into Kiel at about 6 o'clock. There was no difficulty. A guard, in answer to my question, pointed at the Flensburg train. The carriage I got into was not lit at all and almost empty. What a relief to sit! A girl came in to check my ticket, and I went to sleep. We went over the canal in the dark. There were two men in my carriage. I woke up at some wayside station and asked if it was Flensburg. They laughed and said Flensburg was two hours away yet. I muttered sleepily that I was a stranger, and pretended to drop off again.

I reached Flensburg about 10.30 P.M., and thought of the unforgettable opening scene in 'The Riddle of the Sands.' I was no less depressed than "Carruthers" on that occasion. I was very thirsty, but it was a poky little station, and there was nothing in the shape of a waiting-room or coffee-stall. I lingered on the platform and saw a porter who appeared to be closing down for the night. I asked him what time the train to Tondern went next day. He first said 6 o'clock, but then reflected that the next day was Sunday and there would not be a train till eleven. He added that the train went from the other station. So there were two stations in Flensburg! My sentry friend had not told me this. I asked him where the other station was, and he directed me. My German at this juncture was so abominable that I think he must have been a Dane.

At the other station—which I found to be the main one—there was a fairly large crowd in the booking-hall. They were waiting for the incoming 11 o'clock train from the north. Entry to the platform and waiting-rooms was barred. The train came in, the crowd dissolved, and the station was shut up for the night. I had got to put in twelve dreary hours in this place.

I took risks that night in Flensburg, risks that might have been fatal farther south. I argued that here, if anywhere, one might expect to find a scrubby-faced man with a nautical cap and overcoat. I walked for about an hour past the quays, past the two main hotels, then up towards the church, and down again to the quays. I could find no public drinking-fountain, which was what I was looking for, but I had learned the rough geography of the place.

There was a low barrier leading on to one of the quays. The gate was locked, but I climbed the barrier and sat down on a bench. Behind me was one of those pavilions such as are seen on an English pierhead. In front a steamer moored alongside. Both were quite deserted. Here at least I could sit and find solitude.

I took off my boots and attended to one of my toes, which I had rubbed playing hockey the day before. . . .

What weeks ago it seemed! I went through my pockets, and—joy!—found my matches. I smoked a luxurious pipe. Then, still in my socks, I boarded the steamer and searched her for water without success. She was fitted up for passengers, and for a moment I entertained the idea of stowing myself away on her.

Just as I had finished putting on my boots again, a man—a night-watchman I suppose he was—came on to the quay from the left. He must have been attracted by some movement. I confess I thought it was all up.

"What are you doing here?"

"Nothing."

"But you have no business to be here at all."

Silence implied assent. He beckoned me after him. He was not a Prussian, this man, whatever else he was. Perhaps he was afraid of me. He appeared to be taking me into some form of building on my right. I pretended to be coming along after him, but I swerved to the right, scrambled over the barrier, and ran for 200 yards down the street. Fortunately there was no one about. I was not followed. I was thankful I had got my boots on in time.

I passed the first hotel, and saw a woman with a man carrying her bag go in and ask for a room. She got one. I followed in after her, and asked for a bed. The proprietor said he was full up, and shut the door in my face. Could a two days' growth of beard make such a difference in a man? I was rather hurt.

But worse was to follow. I entered another hotel, and saw some *matrosen* (German sailors) being given the keys of their bedrooms by a *fräulein*. I asked her for some coffee. "No." "Water?" "No." "Nothing to drink?" "No, nothing."

I came to my senses and fled. . . .

I went up towards the church, which lies on the top of a steep hill. There are some gardens sloping down the hill. I found an old sort of summer-house in one of these and went to sleep. It was about 1 A.M., and none too warm.

I was up again at dawn and recommenced my weary pilgrimage of the streets of Flensburg. How I hated that place. I half thought of altering my plan and doing the rest of the journey on foot. It was about 70 kilometres to the frontier.

I passed three military policemen in half an hour, and wondered resentfully what *they* were doing in such large quantities on a Sunday morning.

At about 8 I got to the station, and ate my last sandwich. Assuming that the porter had been right the previous night, I had got to put in three hours more dreary waiting. There were no overhead notices, but I noticed a useful-looking collection of time-tables stuck up on big

boards in a little alcove just out of the booking-hall. If I could get behind the rearmost of these I could put in much of my time unobserved. People might come and people might go, but they would never dream that I had been there all the time.

I examined the time-tables. I could make nothing of the Sunday trains, but I found the name Ober-Yersthal. That had been the station given by our informant as the last station outside the Granz-Gebiet. In the maps we had seen in the camp we had never been able to verify this place. Ober-Yersthal must be on the main line running up the east Schleswig coast. So far so good, but at what time would this train go? It could not be the same train as the Tondern train, for Tondern is west Schleswig.

I wandered on to the platform. The bookstall was open, and I bought a paper and also a Pocket Railway Guide. The Guide had a good map. I saw from this that the Tondern and Ober-Yersthal lines branched off at Tinglef. Possibly the two trains went in one as far as Tinglef. I had not long to wait for corroboration. At the cloak-room I heard a man ask the attendant what time the train went for a station which I knew to be north of Ober-Yersthal on the same line. The answer was 11.3. There could be no doubt of it now. I booked for Ober-Yersthal.

I had still an hour to wait. It passed somehow. I went into the waiting-room and got my first drink for twenty-nine hours—a glass of beer. It was washy stuff, but went down wonderfully well. There were a lot of *matrosen* in the waiting-room. Some of them stared at me, and I began to have the Hamburg platform-haunted sensation over again. I pretended to read my paper fiercely for half an hour, and then went on to the platform. I began to regret that I had not had a shave that morning.

The train came in punctually. There was no incident till Tinglef, about 20 kilos northward. There I saw the passport officials waiting on the platform. I had almost forgotten about this part of the business. . . .

I took a sudden resolution, and left the train. I reckoned that I had not more than 40 miles to walk from this point, and by alighting here I might dodge the passport men altogether. But I was undeceived. An official was waiting at the entrance to the subway. He was an easygoing-looking fellow, and was engaged in conversation with some one. He took my passport, glanced at it, and handed it back without a word. He did not even look to compare my face with the photograph. The great moment which Gilbert and I had rehearsed countless times had come and gone.

I hurried through the subway, and saw another passport official talking to the ticket collector. I handed in my Ober-Yersthal ticket. The man

looked up in some surprise, but I was ready for him—

"I have shortened my journey."

"*Ach! So.*"

He asked no more questions. If he had, I doubt if I could have answered them. I was conscious only of one great wish—to be rid of the railway for good. I struck due north out of the station and found myself in a *cul-de-sac*. I was so overjoyed to be quit of the rail that I plunged into the fields. I had not gone very far before I had reason to repent. There was water everywhere, and I made very heavy weather of it. My objective was Lugum Kloster, about twenty miles north-west from Tinglef, and I reckoned that it could not be very long before I struck the main road. After about two hours—it was now 2 o'clock in the afternoon—I found the road. There were very few people about, and those I met gave me a good day civilly enough. If questioned at this point I was going to have been a South German staying with relatives in Flensburg and out for a cross-country ramble. An improbable enough story. . . .

My hopes had risen, and it all seemed reasonably plain sailing now. The people were not suspicious. I had my map, with a few important names, . . . my compass, . . . I might even do it in the next night.

I wondered exactly where old G. was at this moment. It never even occurred to me that he had been caught, but such, as afterwards transpired, was the case.

Passing through one village I met some French prisoners. I gave them good-day and told them who I was. They invited me to come into their room in the farm where they were working. They were able to tell me what village I was in, Dollderup, and this was a great assistance. I thanked them in execrable French, gave them one of my remaining cigarettes, and told them what news I could. They had heard nothing for months. I don't think anything on the whole journey was more difficult than framing those few simple French sentences.

The signposts made the journey easy after that. At 3 P.M. I had 18 kilometres to go to Lugum Kloster. I turned off the road, lay down in some young fir-trees, took off my boots, ate some chocolate, and had an hour or more's sleep.

I started again towards dusk. I was feeling very fit now and full of hope. If only I didn't muck it on the frontier. . . .

The signposts did their duty nobly. There was a keen wind from the north, and the road was good. I had been out just two complete days.

In one village a soldier with a rifle came out of a house just as I passed it. He replied to my "*Guten Abend*" courteously.

I reached Lugum Kloster, I suppose, about half-past nine or ten. It is a big rambling village, and I made a bad mistake here in leaving it. I meant to take the Arrip-Arnum road, which runs roughly north-east. I took a road running

north-east, but after about an hour's walking I found it was leading me gradually more east than north. I had not noticed that the wind had shifted from north to east. I decided to leave the road and make due north on the compass, trusting to pick up the right road later on. Then began a trying time. The ground was terribly wet and intersected with continual wired ditches. I tore my clothes rather badly here, and I don't think my trousers at the end of my journey would have stood another rip. However, I kept due north, tacking to avoid the ditches as little as possible and eventually reached the road. It was, I supposed, about 2 o'clock. I estimated I was still quite ten miles from the frontier. There was a strong wind, and I had not enough matches to spare to look more than once or twice at my map. Added to this, the signposts, previously so well-behaved, became infuriating. They only mentioned names which I had never heard of, or at least had not committed to memory.

Slog! Slog! Slog! I was getting tired. A man passed me with a cart. What on earth did *he* think he was doing at that time of night?

There was lots of water about and I was not thirsty. My cap made an effective cup.

A light railway running parallel to the road—this was the *Klein Bahn* the fellow had told us of.

Slog! Slog! Sl—— What on earth was that? A sentry-box on the roadside, and in the box a sentry yawning and stretching himself. On each side of the road a belt of barbed wire running east and west.

I took these things in vaguely—disconnectedly. Had I miscalculated, and was I over the border after all? He hadn't even challenged. . . .

A mile later I crawled into a little hollow by the roadside to rest and get warm. I was getting strangely light-headed. I remember addressing myself as a separate entity. I pulled myself together and sat down to think. "I must go back and have another look at that wire. It can only be a protective belt for military purposes."

I went back. The wire was there sure enough. So was the sentry-box, but I didn't go up to it. The wire was like the rear defence lines one had seen in France.

I retraced my steps. I still had the idea of picking myself up from the hollow where I had left myself.

I continued my way, praying for the night to end. With the dawn, I felt I should be able to think clearly again.

"Arnum 4 kilometres." The signposts were German enough, anyway.

Arnum, I had made out from my map, lay about three or four kilometres away from the point of the salient where I meant to cross the border. It was nearly dawn, and I saw that I could not get over that night.

It was getting light as I reached the village. I left the road and struck west across

the fields, up on to some high ground.

Somewhere in front there was Denmark.

I chose a hiding-place in some young firs and heather. I was sheltered from the wind and was fairly comfortable.

One more whole day! What an age it seemed! I got out my railway map and looked at my position. I could not be more than five or six kilometres from the frontier. Somewhere in the valley to the north-west stretched the line of sentries. I decided to sally forth while it was still light in the late afternoon, take my bearings, and go over at dark.

As I lay there I heard footsteps. A boy came by singing and passed within two yards of me. He didn't see me. Just as well perhaps. . . .

I took off my boots, rubbed my feet down, and had some chocolate.

About twelve it started to rain and went on for about three hours. I got wet through, but welcomed the rain on the whole, as it would get darker sooner.

I was now thinking quite connectedly, and it being impossible to sleep, I went over in my mind again and again what I meant to do, and what I knew already about the frontier.

I suppose it was about five when I started out. I reckoned there would be about one more hour's daylight. I steered due north-west across fields and marsh land for about three kilometres. Suddenly, to my right—about 400 yards off, the sentries' boxes came full in view. There was no mistaking them, about 200 yards between most of them, and quite 300 yards between the two opposite me.

I plumped down in the heather where I was standing and watched them. I saw a sentry leave his box and walk about 20 yards up and down. I could see nothing that looked like wire. Only marsh and heather in between. . . .

Looking from where I was into Denmark, there was a farmhouse immediately between the two sentry-boxes. I could take my course on that—it would be silhouetted long after dark.

I waited till it was quite dark, and then started off, taking no risks — crawling. I came to a ditch with wire on each side of it. This was the only wire I saw. When judged I was well through I the line, I got up and walked to the farmhouse. A tall figure answered my knock. I began in my best German. . . .

He shook his head to indicate that he didn't understand. I could have kissed him.

At last we hammered it out.

"*Engelsk Offizier. Fangen. Gut.*"

He beckoned me in with beaming face.

I had made good in just seventy-two hours. Beginners' luck!

THE ROCK OF FERGUS.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

THAT long and fair arm of the sea which is now called Belfast Lough was once called Carrickfergus Bay. The change in the name of the water marks a change in the position on the land. The great modern commercial city of Belfast has supplanted the small ancient mediæval city of Carrickfergus. Belfast a little more than a hundred years ago was little more than a village; it is now, as one of its most illustrious sons[1] said the other day, not merely one of the great towns of Ireland, but one of the great towns of the world. Carrickfergus has scarcely outgrown the ruins of its walls which were erected centuries ago to protect its English settlers against the Irish and Scots "who are our enemies."

Belfast stands a living proof that, notwithstanding the ruin which the Union is said by its foes to have brought upon Ireland, energy and enterprise there as elsewhere bring abundance and prosperity. And yet unmoving Carrickfergus has a longer if not a better lesson to teach; for it itself is Ulster in little, and its history is the history of Ulster writ small.

The little white city by the sea bears on its face the marks of the vicissitudes of the fortunes of men. The Norman Castle still stands stoutly on the great rock in the bay where John de Courcy placed it. The Norman Church erected by the Catholic piety of Hugh de Lacy is now the Protestant parish church. The big Franciscan monastery has entirely disappeared; it is said that the monks when they were driven forth from it prayed that the place should ever henceforth be a home of thieves. If they did so their prayer must have been heard; for, after being the home of the robber Chichesters, it became the county prison. At the little quay they will point out to you "William's Stone," the spot where the foot of the Prince of Orange first touched Irish land; and the North Gate of the ancient walls still remains, repaired and restored in memory of Queen Victoria's jubilee. And you will see marks of the three races who have lived in it—the English town close to the Castle with its Governor's Walk, its High Street, its town hall, market-house, and almshouses; and on the north of it the Scotch Quarter, and on the south of it the Irish Quarter. In Belfast the Scottish and Irish people of the working class still live in different districts of the town; but these districts are now not called Scotch and

[1] Viscount Bryce, O.M.

Irish, but Protestant and Catholic. And not far along the shore towards Belfast and near to Trooper's Lane is that indispensable appurtenance of an ancient county town, the Gallows Green, though the Silent Sisters, as the old triangular gibbet was called, on which so many bad—and good—men died, has disappeared, let us hope for ever.

And as I have said, the history of this little city is the history of Ulster writ small. The Fergus who, by contriving to get drowned on its shore, gave Carrickfergus his name, is the same Fergus who, by leading the first Irish—then called Scots—across the North Channel, gave Scotland her name. Whether there was in his time any fortress on the Rock is not known; but the great castle, which now turns it into an Irish Chateau de Chillon, was built over seven hundred years ago by the first Norman Conquerors; and the little town was founded by the English merchants and adventurers who followed in their wake. In the turbulent times which succeeded the conquest the town was often burned, but the Castle was never captured, by the Irish. Three times it has fallen—once to Scottish, once to English, and once to French arms; but it has always remained impregnable to native forces.

It is one of the ironies of Irish history that the conquest by England of the Roman Church's most devoted daughter was begun at the instigation of the Roman Church. Hadrian the Fourth urged it on King Henry in order to secure various objects, one of which was declared to be the extension of the boundaries of the Church, for at that time the Church in Ireland did not acknowledge Rome's supremacy. Of all these objects, that is the only one to this day completely secured. The reason for the failure of all the others was ever the same—the want of a firm and fixed policy. Henry II. came to Ireland and received complete submission. If he had devoted a very little of his time and power to a thorough establishment of his rule, that submission might have been made permanent, and the authority of law been as unquestioned henceforth in Ireland as it was in England. But Henry contented himself with accepting the submission and then portioning out the country among his chief barons. All Ulster fell to John de Courcy "to enjoy in that land all he could conquer with the sword, reserving to the King homage and fealty." For centuries after all that the English King received from the Norman barons was homage and fealty, and he did not always get that. Every time Carrickfergus was visited afterwards by an English King he came for the purpose of punishing refractory subjects. King John came to take vengeance on Hugh de Lacy; and he made the city and county of Carrickfergus a county palatine. Richard the Second

came too on a similar errand. But when the English King returned to England the English nobles returned to independence, and spent their time in the old ways—fighting the native chiefs and one another, harrying the inhabitants, natives, and settlers alike, and brooking no interference from Dublin Castle.

Edward the First took it into his head to conquer Scotland: he would have been wiser if he had tried to consolidate his rule in Ireland. As it was, all his attack on Scotland brought his successor was Bannockburn and an Irish war. The success of the Scots in driving the English from their country inspired the native Irish with the hope with Scottish aid of driving them from theirs. They offered Edward Bruce the Crown of Ireland. He came to Carrickfergus, and it is said by some was crowned there King of Ireland; he certainly was visited there by his greater brother, King Robert; he marched south, was defeated and slain; and once more Carrickfergus and its castle were inhabited and garrisoned by the English.

The only effect of the Scottish interference in Irish affairs was to spread additional suffering and complete chaos over the land. The ferocity with which the war was carried on is inconceivable. The Scots slaughtered and plundered English and Irish alike. As for the English, one little tale tells all that need be told. When the Scots were besieging Carrickfergus Castle, the English garrison agreed to surrender if it was not relieved by a certain day. The day came, but not the relief, and thirty Scots came to the castle gate to demand surrender. They were admitted to the castle yard; then the gate was closed, and the Scots were killed and eaten by the starving garrison. The English nobles, too, disgusted with the failure of the English Government to support them, repudiated it and their nationality. They adopted Irish names and customs, intermarried with the native Irish and the Hebridean Scots, and became, as the phrase is, more Irish than the Irish themselves. The only part of all Ulster which remained English in language, blood, and allegiance was for a time Carrickfergus and its little Pale.

"Ireland," said the late Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, to a new Lord-Lieutenant who was talking freely of the impossible and inevitable in Irish affairs—"Ireland, your Excellency should remember, is a country where the inevitable seldom happens and the impossible frequently comes to pass." If we remember this, we shall not be surprised to find that the event which made Ireland intensely Papist was an outrage committed upon her by a Papist queen. Henry VIII. began a policy of settlement, and a wise policy it was. He conferred English titles on the

native chiefs, summoned them to an Irish Parliament, and gave them an equal share with the English in managing Irish affairs. When he introduced the Reformation into Ireland he divided the confiscated Church lands among English and Irish alike, and the latter took them with as little (or less) hesitation as the former. This policy promised in time to create a new Anglo-Irish Ireland. Queen Mary reversed it. She determined to make Ireland English by giving it to Englishmen. She deprived the O'Connors of their lands, turned them into two English shires, and gave them to Englishmen. From that moment terror possessed all native landowners as to what was going to happen to themselves; and when Mary's Protestant successor on the English throne continued her policy, they became what they never had been before — violently Papist, the Pope being then England's greatest enemy. Henceforth devotion to Rome became the hall-mark of Irish nationality; and henceforth every rebellion, whatever its origin or whoever its leaders, became before long a Catholic crusade. "Thou," said the Earl of Essex scornfully to the great rebel Tyrone— "thou to talk about religion! Thou hast no more religion than my horse!" Probably Essex was right; but Tyrone knew well enough what he was about. Then as now, the Irish tribes were Romanists first and Irishmen afterwards.

I myself once thought that principle had ceased to apply; but I was soon shown my error by personal experience. In a non-lucid interval I became a candidate for Parliament. The constituency was an English urban one; and I, following the traditions of my family (my grandfather was "out" in 1798), stood as a Liberal; and, Home Rule being part of the Liberal programme, as a Home Ruler. During my candidature I found, somewhat to my surprise, that the Irish Catholic working class in English towns live apart from their Protestant fellow-workmen much as they do in Belfast. When canvassing the district which they inhabited, I received nothing but promises of support until I happened on a man who, I understood, owned most of the houses in it. He refused his support point-blank; and in doing so said, "Let me tell you, sir, you're wasting your time here. Last Sunday we were told from the altar that we must vote Unionist for the sake of the Catholic schools; and whatever they tell you, every man here will vote Unionist." I was at the time struck with this remark, and was more impressed with it when on the eve of the poll I found all the walls plastered with a placard on which appeared a telegram from the Home Rule Lord Mayor of Dublin calling on Irish Catholics to vote for the Unionist and Catholic education. When the votes were counted I made it my business to ascertain the boxes contain-

ing the votes from the Irish district, and watched their count: they were practically solid for the Unionist. I cannot help thinking that, if it is desired to stop the boycott of the British Parliament by the Sinn Fein M.P.'s, it might be well to try the effect of introducing a bill for secularising British and Irish education.

This is by way of digression. Returning to Queen Mary's policy of turning Ireland English by giving it to Englishmen, it was one which to be successful necessitated the extermination of the Irish. This Mary does not seem to have realised, and so the result of her policy was to introduce not an English population but merely an English proprietary. Most of the confiscated land remained in the occupation of the native Irishmen: the Englishmen merely collected the rents. Accordingly it failed.

In Elizabeth's time the same policy was followed in Munster when the great family of Desmond Fitzgeralds was overthrown; and it failed there too. In Ulster Lord Mountjoy and Sir Arthur Chichester adopted ruthlessly the policy of "thorough." In their struggle with Tyrone and his allies they destroyed by sword or famine every Irish man, woman, and child on the lands over which their armies passed. Chichester from Carrickfergus devastated and depopulated the country around for twenty miles on every side. Never before did any man so completely make a desert and call it peace. But this policy had this advantage: on the subsequent confiscation of the land it was clear for new inhabitants. The crowns of England and Scotland were by this time united, and the new population who occupied the land about Carrickfergus were Lowland Scots. Till the other day the ordinary language of the district was the language of the Lowlander, and till this day five-sixths of the people of the district are of unmixed Lowland descent.

These settlers were planted, as the Romans planted military colonies on lands they had conquered, as a guard to protect the interests, political and religious, of their native land, and their pay was the profits of the land on which they were planted. And whatever else may be said of them, they did protect those interests faithfully and well. When under Sir Phelim O'Neill the native Irish rebelled and the massacre of Protestants began, those of them who escaped assembled within the walls of Carrickfergus and held their ground there till they were relieved from Scotland. When dethroned James the Second attempted to make Ireland a jumping-off spot for the reconquest of England, Carrickfergus Castle was in his Irish army's hands, but the male settlers of the district, leaving behind them homesteads and families, assembled at Londonderry, and there stood firm against him and famine; and when that city was relieved and Carrickfergus Castle retaken, they marched with William and his army to the

Boyne and Dublin. Only once since they arrived in Ireland have they failed in their loyalty to Great Britain, and that was when they believed that they themselves had been betrayed by her, which is a circumstance that some English politicians and publicists of the present day would do well to consider.

The third capture of Carrickfergus Castle was by the French in 1760, when we were at war with Louis the Fifteenth. Thouret—himself half an Irishman—arrived in Carrickfergus Roads with three French warships and landed some eight hundred men. He called on the city and castle of Carrickfergus to surrender, and the military governor was inclined to do so; but the Mayor, one Willoughby Chaplin, informed him if he did not resist he would indict him for treason, so he resisted. After a gallant fight the garrison's ammunition gave out and further resistance became impossible. Thouret behaved very well to the conquered. He even invited the Mayor, who was his prisoner, to dine with him and his officers; and the story goes that after dinner, when the bottle had circulated freely, he called on his worship for a song. Mr Chaplin gracefully complied and sang "The British Grenadiers." Mr Chaplin seems to have been a pleasant sort of fellow, and one you would like to go out with when tiger-hunting.

But by this time the star of Carrickfergus was beginning to pale before the rising sun of Belfast. Till the end of the eighteenth century that sun rose slowly enough. Still it rose. Belfast was more commercial and less mediæval than Carrickfergus, and it had the advantage of situation: the chief Scottish settlement in Ulster was on the north and south sides of the Lagan, and Belfast, placed at the mouth of that river, was its natural centre. With the Union the sun of Belfast rose, as Mr Gladstone would have said, by leaps and bounds. At the Union it had about twenty thousand inhabitants; to-day it has about half a million.

And an even more remarkable change has since the Union taken place in Belfast. Before the Union it was the home of the Society of United Irishmen pledged to bring about at any cost the separation of Ireland from Great Britain; now it is the home of the Covenant pledged to prevent at any cost the separation of Ireland from Great Britain. I have already said that Ulstermen's former disloyalty and its cause is a matter worthy of the consideration of some politicians and publicists of the present day. So is their present loyalty and its cause.

As I pointed out, the Scottish settlers came to Ireland as a guard to protect the interests of their native land, and their recompense was to be the profits of the land on which they were planted. After the great defeat of the native Irish in 1689, both the Government and the "undertakers" who had planted the settlers in Ulster came to

think there was no longer any need for such a guard. Accordingly the Government, being Episcopalian, began to persecute the settlers as dissenters, and the undertakers to treat them as tenants at will. The settlers regarded themselves as betrayed. They had saved the Protestant religion in Ireland, and they were being harried for being Protestants. They had made the empty land worth money, and the undertakers were taking all the money it was worth. Tens of thousands of them left Ulster for the American Colonies with their hearts burning with resentment, and when the Colonies revolted they joined in the Revolution with their whole souls. They gave Washington Montgomery, Knox, Wayne, Stewart, and Maxwell among his best Generals, and thousands of backwoodsmen among his best soldiers. No less than nine of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were exiled Ulster Scots; and so were John Hancock, the first president, and Charles Thompson, the perpetual secretary of Congress. When Washington's army was starving at Valley Forge, it was the prodigal generosity of Ulstermen which brought it relief. So through their resentment of their betrayal at home Great Britain suffered the greatest calamity that ever befell her abroad. It nearly brought about even a greater calamity. Seldom has any man been able to inflict such a wrong on his country as that Chichester who became the first Marquis of Donegal. He was an absentee, and to supply his wants in London he permitted thousands of his Scottish tenants in Ulster to be evicted to make place for Irish Catholics who were willing to give the landlord all the land produced, except sufficient butter-milk and potatoes to support their own lives. At first the Scots directed their hatred against the new tenants; but soon it turned against the Government which had permitted the promises on which their fathers had come to Ulster to be broken, and they joined with the disaffected Catholics. They were helped to do this by the French Revolution. Religious passion among them had cooled, and many of them dreamt of a United Ireland free from it and with equal rights for all, and free too from the Government and landlords who oppressed both Protestant and Catholic alike; so in Belfast a joint-rebellion of the north and south was planned. Before the struggle had lasted a week the Ulstermen had been awakened from their dream; the rebellion in the south had once more developed into a Catholic crusade led by fanatical Catholic priests and accompanied by massacres of Protestants.

The rebellion had important consequences in Ulster. It convinced the Government and the landlords that their interests still needed guarding, and it convinced the Ulster Scots that co-operation between the North and South

was impossible. The landlords once more recognised the Ulster custom of tenant-right, and the Government encouraged trade and commerce in Ulster. With the Union justice advanced quickly. All religious disabilities were abolished, the Church tithe which the Presbyterians hated followed, tenant-right was enforced against the landlords by statute, and then the tenants were given the right to purchase their farms. Now the Protestants of Ulster find themselves perfectly free and perfectly contented and attached to the people of Great Britain, not merely by the Union, but by the stronger ties of a common race and a common religion, common traditions and common ideas, while they are separated from the Catholics of the South on every one of these points. That is shortly why they are now as anxious to maintain the British connection as they were before '98 to break it. I wonder what would be the effect on them of another betrayal?

Their position at present is very simple, and it seems to me very strong. Ulster, they say, is as much a part of the United Kingdom as Middlesex or Midlothian, and we deny the right of Parliament, as the people of Middlesex or Midlothian would, if it were their case, deny the right of Parliament, to turn it out of the Union against the wishes of the majority of its inhabitants. If the other three provinces want to separate from the United Kingdom, then, though we think such a separation will be disastrous to them and to Great Britain, if Parliament agrees we cannot claim to veto it. If a scheme of devolution applicable equally to all parts of the United Kingdom is made law though we doubt its utility and know that nobody in Ireland wants it, we of course will accept it, and work it as best we can. But we will not submit to be treated as a colony or dependency, and have a new constitution forced on us: the colonies and dependencies were not parts of the United Kingdom, and so when they had constitutions made for them were not deprived of any rights as parts of it. We are the sons of Great Britain, not her slaves to be sold by her when she gets into difficulties.

This position of the Ulstermen may be very unreasonable, but at any rate it is not so wicked as to entitle English newspapers to misrepresent and abuse them for it. Yet misrepresented and abused they are. At this moment I have an example before me: it is a leaderette published in the agony of the great war when Ulster was straining every nerve to help the suffering Empire. Here it is:—

"The New Napper Tandy.

"Sir Roger Casement's descent on his native shores with a cargo of arms and ammunition provided by Germany is a piece of comic relief which ought to delight 'George Birmingham.' Sir Roger Casement is an Ulster Protestant, an ex-Consular official of the British Government, which conferred a knighthood and a pension on him, and yet we find him gun-running with a submarine boat

off the Irish coast, after a twelvemonth of anti-English propaganda in Berlin. He has had many predecessors in the invasion of Ireland, but he most resembles the famous Napper Tandy—another Ulster Protestant by the way. Tandy landed in September 1798, at Rutland Island, near Arran, from a French brig, the *Anacreon*, with the object of distributing arms and proclamations. Unfortunately for him the population were so little responsive that they took to the hills and refused to come down and fraternise with Napper Tandy and his foreign allies. Sir Roger Casement has been less fortunate than Napper Tandy in that he has not been able even to land on the Irish shore. His gasconading is laughed at by the overwhelming majority of the Irish people, which, thanks to Mr Redmond, is firmly loyal to the Allies, and has no use for mischievous poseurs like Sir Roger Casement."

The ignorance and malevolence which inspired this are evident enough when it is remembered that Napper Tandy was born in the Cornmarket, Dublin; that this very paper just before the war was holding up Casement and that foolish son of an illustrious sire,[1] Captain White, as irresistible proofs of the loyalty of Home Rulers and as examples whom all other Ulster Protestants should follow; and that, as every one who knew anything about the country was aware, all the South of Ireland was at that very moment seething with sedition. As a matter of fact, the later editions of that very issue of the paper with this insult to Ulster Protestants still in it, contained telegrams announcing that a rebellion had broken out in the South of Ireland, that Dublin was in possession of the rebels, and that scores of British soldiers had been shot dead in its streets. What would have been the end of that rebellion if the million of Ulster Protestants had taken the paper's advice and followed the example of Casement?

Another form of misrepresentation which some British papers indulge in to gull the English workman is that the opposition to separation in Ulster is inspired by the landlords and capitalists. Nothing could be further from the truth. If it depended on these classes I do not think myself it would be long before separation came. The landlords of Ulster never showed any great patriotism except when their own interests were concerned, and now, having mostly sold their lands to their tenants, their chief interest is in a quiet life and unimpeded sports. Besides, they are mixed in blood. It was an old Lady Thomond who, when her confessor explained to her what fate she might expect in the next world if she turned Protestant in this one, proudly answered, "Is it not better that an old woman should burn in hell than that the Thomonds should lose their inheritance?" and the Ulster Catholic landowners acted generally on that principle: the Macdonnells and O'Neills and O'Haras turned Protestant to preserve what remained to

[1] Field-Marshal Sir George White, V.C.

them of their inheritance, and the Chichesters and Hills and Stewarts freely intermarried with them to share it. It was the classes among both the Scots and the Irish who had little inheritance to preserve who stuck stoutly to their race and religion; and it is they who entertain strong views for and against the Union. As to capitalists influencing the opposition to separation, it is common knowledge that the greatest capitalist and employer of labour in Ulster, Lord Pirrie, head of the firm of Harland & Wolff, is an avowed Home Ruler; and he himself would admit that his conversion to Home Rule did not bring over to it a dozen out of the twenty thousand workmen he employs. As he told a friend of mine, "I and my workmen have agreed to differ."

Neither is the opposition based on bigotry, as British papers sometimes say. It is true the Ulster Protestant when merry, and on special occasions, used to shout "to hell with the Pope," just as the Ulster Catholic under similar circumstances shouted "to hell with King William." (By the way, that always struck me as rather a compliment to King William, since it assumes that he is not there as yet.) But this is only a sort of traditional and festive practice. I remember Willie Wilde (the brother of Oscar), who went the North-East Circuit in Ireland before he came to England, telling me of an experience of his which is evidence of this. A most respectable man was brought before the Resident Magistrate in Belfast for cursing the Pope on the twelfth of July. There had been disturbances in the town, and the magistrate resolved to increase the penalty for using what are there called party expressions; so instead of fining the prisoner five shillings as usual, he fined him fifteen. "But," remonstrated the prisoner indignantly, "the price is five shillings—I have paid it dozens of times." "You are fined fifteen shillings," replied the magistrate quietly, "and if you don't pay it, you must go to jail." Intensely annoyed, the prisoner took out his purse and counted out fifteen shillings. As he handed them to the Clerk of the Court he said, "There they are; and before I curse the Pope again, I'll see him in eternal hell first."

But although there is little real bigotry among Ulster Protestants, there is a strong objection to the despotism of the Catholic priest. The priest in the bitter beginning of the eighteenth century, by his devotion to and sufferings for his people, earned all the affection with which they regard "soggarth aroon." If that were all, the Ulster Protestant would not mind. But the priest seems in the Irish mind to have succeeded to the old position of the aboriginal Druid who controlled chiefs and tribes by the fear of laying a curse on them and their lands if they disobeyed him. The people's subservience to him revolts the independent Ulsterman who elects his own

ministers and who treats his own ministers' opinions on politics, or for that matter on anything else, with no more respect than he gives to those of any other educated man.

This subservience to the priesthood is what paralyses Irish politicians, for the opinions of the priesthood are divided. The bulk of the secular clergy are sons of shopkeepers and small farmers, are educated at home and share the sympathies and hopes of the classes from which they are drawn: they are strongly Nationalist, and regard the Church of Rome as the Church of Ireland. The bulk of the regular clergy are sons of squireens or professional men, are educated abroad, and have the sympathies and hopes of the Ultramontane of the Continent: they are strongly conservative, and regard the Church of Ireland as merely a branch of the Church Universal. The secular clergy dream of an Ireland Catholic and independent; the regular clergy of an Ireland Catholic and missionary. The latter aspire to make Ireland what she once was, the land which carried the light of the true religion to the dark places in Great Britain and Western Europe, and they know she is likelier to become this as a part of the mighty British Empire than as a little fifth-rate independent state. This conflict of opinion, as I have said, paralyses Irish politicians: it was it that led the Presbyterian rebel, John Mitchell, to say that the Irish might have been free years ago if it had not been for their damned souls; and it is it that has made every nationalist movement not led by a Protestant a mere fatuity. The Sinn Fein is led by a Catholic Spaniard: we shall see soon whether he will prove more effective than a native Catholic.

Of late the more thoughtful and considerate of British supporters of separation have been appealing to the patriotism of the Ulsterman. They ask him to agree because dominion self-government will make the Sinn Feiners loyal to the Empire. He does not believe it. Has it made, he asks, other peoples within the Empire who are different in race and religion from the predominant people loyal to it? Are there no Nationalists in Dutch South Africa or French Quebec? They ask him to agree to it because the Empire has committed itself to the principle of race self-government in Germany, Austria, and Turkey, and it must be consistent. He asks in reply, is it inconsistent then, because you break up your enemies' empire, to refuse to break up your own? Besides, the question of race does not arise. If we are to divide the United Kingdom according to race, he says, England, South and East Scotland and North-East Ireland, should form the one section, and Wales, North-West Scotland, and South and West Ireland should form the other. How, he asks, would the Wee Frees of the Highlands and the Methodists (Primitive and otherwise) of

Wales like the rule of the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, to which many of them are so willing to subject the Ulster Protestants? Then it is argued that dominion self-government is necessary to conciliate opinion in America. The Ulsterman doubts. In all things except numbers Ulster has contributed more to the greatness of the United States than all the rest of Ireland. I have already mentioned her services in the War of Independence. Since then ten of its twenty-six Presidents (including Mr Woodrow Wilson) were of Ulster descent: was there ever one of Catholic Irish origin? Thoughtful Americans will, they believe, reflect on this when it is proposed to compel Ulstermen to submit to Irish Catholic rule. And besides, it is possible that dominion self-government might lead to the Irish Protestants emigrating to the United States, as misgovernment led many of them to do before. That, no doubt, would be very satisfactory to the United States; but would any benefit resulting from American friendship compensate the British Empire for their loss? Let Englishmen remember the services Irish Protestants have rendered England these last hundred or more years of the Union. In the Napoleonic wars they gave her the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh; in the Indian Mutiny, General John Nicholson, Sir Henry Montgomery, and the two Lawrences; in the South African War, Lord Roberts and Field-Marshal Sir George White; and in the last and most desperate war of all, Field-Marshal Sir John French, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener, and Admiral Sir David Beatty. Is it quite certain that any of these wars would have been won without these men?

The Ulsterman freely admits that no man who wishes prosperity and peace to the British Empire could feel anything but gratitude to any politician or publicist who cured the Irish trouble. He fears, however, that it is not possible to effect an immediate cure. Of course he knows the contempt with which any declaration that anything is impossible is received by the superior person. He knows also of what Napoleon said: "Impossible! Never let me hear that stupid word again." Napoleon was the greatest practical man that ever lived, and so he concerned himself only with what was practicable. When he found anything could not be altered, he accepted it as a fact, and made his plans on the assumption that it was a fact. In his youth he thought the invasion of England was possible; he found out afterwards that it was not; and henceforth he conducted his affairs on that assumption. So, the Ulster Protestant says, should the affairs of Ireland be conducted—on the assumption that the divisions and disagreements of the Irish people cannot in this age be arranged. And he is the more convinced

of the truth of this since no proposal to arrange them has ever been put forward a second time. Mr Gladstone made the first, and it was rejected by Parliament on the ground that it did not do something which Mr Gladstone said it passed the wit of man to do. When Mr Gladstone was once more in a position to propose an arrangement of Irish affairs, he proposed one which tried to do what he had previously said passed the wit of man to accomplish. It was rejected too. When Mr Asquith came into office another proposal was made bearing no resemblance to either of Mr Gladstone's. It became law; but no human being in England or Ireland suggests now that that law should operate, or would be, if it operated, a settlement.

The latest specific for the ills of Ireland is promulgated by a great Unionist newspaper owned by an Irish absentee. It bears no resemblance to Mr Asquith's specific. Its two great characteristics are that one party in Ireland is to have double representation, and besides that, it is to have a free veto on the legislation of the whole kingdom. The first seems not quite in accordance with the modern principle of one vote one value, and the free veto is hardly likely to be approved by persons who know that it once existed in Poland, and was found there to be the most potent instrument of anarchy the world has ever known. The Ulstermen cannot think that this was the reason the new constitution-monger adopted it; they think he must have done so merely because he knew no better.

A great medical writer[1] has said of individuals: "There is a destiny made for a man by his ancestors, and no one can elude the tyranny of his organisation." The Ulsterman thinks this is true of states. If the Irish problem is incapable of immediate solution, he thinks it is no use abusing one side or the other. English, Scots, and Irish have each perpetrated on one another nameless atrocities. It is a pity they cannot agree to forget them; but that they cannot do so is not a peculiarly Irish characteristic; all nations of peasants take a long time to forget. In the long winter evenings the father by the fireside tells the son of the wrongs suffered by his ancestors of which his father told him, and the son adopts the wrongs as his own. A friend of mine, who sat for a county division in South-West Scotland, told me that once when canvassing he came late at night to a lonely farm-house. All the inmates were in bed. He knocked loudly at the door, and, after a time, a night-capped head was thrust through an upper window. "What the deil," asked the head in no friendly tone, "dae ye come here hammerin' at my door at this 'oor o' the nicht?" My friend answered,

[1] Dr Maudsley.

"I am the Whig candidate, and I want to know if you'll vote for me." There was a moment of silence and reflection. Then the voice said, "My faythers great-great-great-grandfaythers lost a thoomb at Bothwell Brig, and dae ye think that efter that I'm likely to vote for a Tory?" And as Sir Henry Maine has pointed out, the popular resentment over wrongs done to a people is often infinitely more fierce years after the wrong has been righted than it was when the wrong was newly done.

This is the Ulsterman's view of the illness of Ireland. Considering it carefully, perhaps the thoughtful Englishman may be inclined to hold that it would be safer not to seek too early a cure. Time and patience are sound though slow physicians for a sick State; the surgeons, haste and rashness, have shattered the constitution of many a mighty empire. Perhaps it would be wise to try the humdrum treatment of the physicians, aided by justice and firmness, before resorting to desperate operations which may end in the crippling or even dissolution of the British Commonwealth, or in adding another and more terrible wound to the many scars of Ireland.

A COMPANY OF TANKS.

BY MAJOR W. H. L. WATSON, D.S.O., D.C.M.,
Author of 'Adventures of a Despatch Rider.'

CHAPTER VII.—THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES—PREPARATIONS.

(July 1917.)

WE had begun the year in confident anticipation of a "great battle," which was to give the enemy such a handsome blow that he would go reeling back towards his frontiers, and in the winter either ask for peace or lick his sores, until in the springtime, with a concentration of every man and gun, we would crush him once and for all. Before Arras optimists had hoped that we might make an end of things that season, but the rumours abroad of delay in preparations, of the too slow provision of material and men, and of the breaking-up of the Russian Armies, sobered our prophecies. Even with the great battle to which we pinned our faith, we should want another year. After Arras we were a little crestfallen: the second act of that battle had been so obviously a failure, and the grand attack of the French — a victory until it was fought — made curiously little progress. The taking of the Messines Ridge was encouraging, and for a time we cast covetous eyes on Lille; but, thinking it over, we began to rate Messines at its true value—a very notable but local success.

As early as March the good people of Amiens were whispering "Ypres," and the prognostications of the Amienois were always astonishingly correct. It was obvious to the merest amateur that the Salient was boiling with activity, and, as one fact after another was revealed, we could soon make a pretty shrewd guess at the probable course of events. The great battle was to take place in the neighbourhood of Ypres, and our hearts sank to our boots.

The Salient represented all that was most horrible in war. The veteran, experienced in the terrors of the Brickstacks or the Somme, would feel that he had something still to learn and suffer if he had not done his time in the Salient. The first and second battles, it was true, had been triumphs of defence, but triumphs so full of tragedy that a man cannot tell of them without bringing sorrow. It is not easy to forget the fruitless massacre of Hill 60, that ghastly morning when the 14th Division, never too lucky, were driven out of their trenches by liquid fire; that night when the choking Zouaves came back to the canal, and

the moonlight shining through the green fumes of the gas-shells in Boesinghe, and the troubled old French general in the chateau whose brigade-major was so pathetically insistent on the counter-attacks that would surely be put in hand at once, and the shell which blotted out my patrol. . . .

The thought of tanks in the Salient made those of us shiver a little who knew the country. The Salient had swallowed up so many reputations and made so few. With water everywhere just below the surface, and a heavy preliminary bombardment, the ground would be almost impassable for tanks, and if it rained . . . Surely, we felt, there could never have been a more hopeless enterprise! It was an ugly business. Yet I must confess that in the eager hustle and stir of our preparations we became almost confident; those who had never seen the Salient made light of our fears; perhaps, after all, Johnson's "unditching beam" would see us through; they would never send the tanks to the Salient if they had not made sure. We allowed ourselves to be encouraged, and, hoping against hope, entered upon the battle.

Experiments certainly were made. One of my tanks, with a few others, were sent away to demonstrate how easy it was for tanks to cross dykes and ditches and wet ground. . . .

Several crews were taken from the battalion to form a special company, which was hedged round with mystery and secrecy. There was soon, however, a strong rumour in the camp that this company was destined to land at Ostend with an army under Rawlinson from England. As I had no desire to know more about the matter than was good for me, I did not take an early opportunity of going to Amiens to learn the truth. However, the secret was not too badly kept—I believe the doctor's daughter at Blangy knew nothing of it. I heard later—but I am sure my information must have been inaccurate — that the whole project was quite frankly discussed in the more discreet drawing-rooms of London. . .

Before the battle actually began we were told little but surmised much, and our surmises proved moderately correct. We were bidding for the coast. . . .

There was something of a tragic experiment in the Battle of the Somme. We had hoped vaguely then that the German line might be broken or at least dangerously bent, but we had seen no glittering prize to grasp. And after the first few days when our tremendous and expensive assults had created but a microscopic indentation, we realised in a spirit of grim fatalism that the battle must become, as indeed it did, a series of terrible mechanical attacks in an atmosphere of monstrous shelling.

We looked forward to the great battle of 1917 in a different spirit. Perhaps we knew more about it. Perhaps the

early successes at Arras had encouraged us. Perhaps the mere companionship of our tanks infected us with optimism. We did feel that there was a cheerful breadth of conception about it—and we knew that we had guns innumerable and limitless ammunition. . . .

In July 1917 the line from the coast to the Lys was divided into four sectors, each widely different from the others. First, there was the narrow front on the coast, where men fought among the sand-dunes. This sector we had just taken over and stiffened with guns. It was rumoured—I believe with truth — that here we would attack. If no attack was intended, it is difficult to account for the concentration of guns, infantry, and aeroplanes.

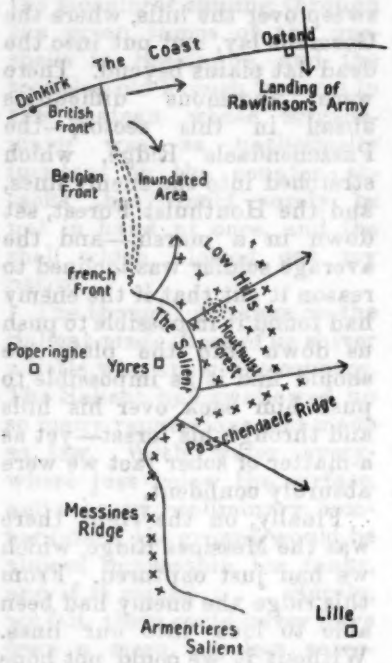
From the right flank of the coast sector practically to the left re-entrant of the Ypres Salient stretched the inundated area, where Belgians and Germans had looked through their field-glasses at each other since the early days of the war. Here it was almost impossible to attack.

Then came the infamous Salient, where for so many bitter months we had clung desperately to the skirts of the foothills. Our trenches were overlooked and water-logged; our approaches were observed and shelled mercilessly, and all the areas back to Poperinghe were shelled, while lately bombing by night had become more frequent and unpleasant. Now we were expecting to sweep over the hills, where the Germans lay, and out into the dead flat plains beyond. There were enormous difficulties ahead in this sector,—the Passchendaele Ridge, which stretched into the enemy lines, and the Houthulst Forest, set down in a marsh,—and the average soldier was inclined to reason it out that if the enemy had found it impossible to push us down into the plain we should find it as impossible to push him back over his hills and through his forest—yet as a matter of sober fact we were absurdly confident.

Finally, on the right there was the Messines Ridge, which we had just captured. From this ridge the enemy had been able to look into our lines. Without it we could not hope to attack from the Salient, for the attackers would have had the enemy sitting on a hill to their left rear. Now we had won it, and on a narrow front would give the Germans a taste of the Salient.

This, then, was the motive of the battle — to push through along the coast and at the Ypres Salient, forcing the German back from his edge of the floods by threatening his flanks. At the height of the operations a strong force equipped with tanks would land at Ostend, and once more the German Army would possess a vulnerable right flank.

This diagram will show roughly the outline of the operations, as we understood they would be:—



We had struck the first blow in the battle of Messines; the enemy struck the second. They made a sudden skilful attack on the coast sector, and, showing themselves, as always, masters of the local operation with a limited objective, did serious damage. A brigade was practically annihilated, a division was roughly handled, and all our preparations were put so badly out of gear that soon a number of big guns came trundling south to the Salient. . . .

In that little pocket-handkerchief of a tankodrome at Eclimeux we were making our preparations in our own small way for the grand battle. We had drawn a job lot of tanks, the majority of which had been much in use at the driving-school at Wailly. Some of them we had even taken over "in situ" at Wailly, where we made good in haste the damage done by successive classes. At this period of its existence the Tank Corps was always in a hurry. Everything was left to the last minute, and then there was a sudden scare. It did not please the men that they had to patch up tanks at the last minute before going north. Some tanks were in so poor a state that the Brigade Commander very properly refused to take them.

Leaving my men to work all day—by this time I had managed to scrape most of my company together again—I drove north on the 2nd July to see Jumbo, who had been sent on ahead to our destination, Oosthoek Wood, north of Vlamertinghe, which is the village half-way between Poperinghe and Ypres.

I found after a hot and dusty ride that the site of our proposed camp was on the northern edge of the wood, close by a siding and a very obvious ramp. It was a part of the world which the German gunner found interesting. Jumbo was quite clear on the point, though Jumbo himself, revelling in the cool and shade of the woods after hot days forward on reconnaissance, did not turn a hair. The ramp and the northern edge of Oosthoek Wood were shelled nightly. There were two painfully fresh shell-holes in the middle of the area allotted to us, and "G" Battalion across the road

were not sleeping at all. One night they actually left their camp, and I am afraid when they returned they found one or two little things were missing. Anyway, at breakfast the next morning, Horobin, Jumbo's batman, had a broad smile. We found too, on examination, that the undergrowth had been thoroughly fouled by the constant succession of troops who had stayed for a night or so, and then had gone back to rest or forward to the Line.

In short, I had no love for the place.

We took the opportunity of studying the approaches to the ramp, which mercifully was broad and strong and approached by a nearly straight stretch of rail. The route to the wood, in which we were instructed to hide our tanks, was only a couple of hundred yards long with no difficulties.

Before I left I was told that a shell had dropped into "C" Battalion Lines and nearly wiped out Battalion Headquarters. I had never liked the Salient, and as I drove in the evening back to Humières it seemed to me clear enough that I should like it even less. That night I dreamed of shells landing in the middle of foul undergrowth. A few days later I heard with more than a little relief that the brigade had decided to move the men's lines to the neighbourhood of La Lovie Chateau, north of Poperinghe. The tanks would remain under a small guard at Oosthoek, and the men would march or be carried down every day to work on them. The scheme had its disadvantages — it is always a nuisance to be too far from your tanks—but the decision was incontrovertibly right. Nothing can be more fretting to the nerves of man than this nagging gunfire at night, and somebody is always hit sooner or later, and the somebody cannot usually be replaced.

We discovered, when the battle had begun, that a prisoner, whom the Germans had taken while we were making our preparations, had informed the Germans, probably under pressure, that there were tanks at Oosthoek Wood. Knowing what they did, it is a little astonishing that the German gunners did not increase their nightly ration of shells, which merely disturbed the guard, who slept under the tanks when not on duty, and did not damage a tank.

A week before we moved my officers were seized with a fantastical idea, and, disdaining to comb their hair, like Spartans before the battle, cropped it almost to the skin. I have known similar outbursts of decapillation. Ward's officers once shaved off their moustaches before Bullecourt, and, when one subaltern indignantly refused to submit, his fellows painted a large moustache on the lower part of his back. Unfortunately he was wounded next day in the same spot. I have often wondered what the nurse must have thought. . . .

One fine morning—it was the 10th of July—my tanks

pulled out of the little tank-drome, and did their best to block the street of Eclimeux. It was an annoying day: so many things went wrong, and we did not know how much time we might be given at the other end to put them right. The track led down the road, across some cornfields, and, leaving our old friends at Blangy on the left, beside the main road to Erin. Eventually all the tanks arrived, and were parked up in the vast enclosure, surrounded by a wall of canvas.

I remember that the entraining was poor. We took nearly forty minutes. Entraining and detraining provide searching tests of a tank's mechanical efficiency and the skill of a crew. If there is any flaw in the tuning, any clumsiness in the driver, driving on to a train will discover it. A tank dislikes a train. It slides on with grunts of obstinate dissatisfaction. If it ever wants to jib, it will jib then. Luckily we had no severe casualties, for to tow a "dud" tank on or off a train may be heart-breaking work. At last all the tanks were neatly covered with tarpaulins, the baggage was placed in the trucks, and the men were settling down and making themselves comfortable. Many months, full of hard fighting, were to pass before "D" Battalion, or what was left of it, returned to Erin. . . .

Cooper and I, in a car loaded, as usual, with kit, drove north through Heuchin and over the hills, and along the main road to Aire and lunch in a cool tea-room. Then on we went to Hazebrouck and Bailleul, and at last to Poperinghe, thick with troops. The sign of the Fifth Army, the Red Fox, was everywhere; and the Fifth Army was in those days known as the Army of Pursuit. Outside the town we passed the King of the Belgians, apparently riding alone — a fine unassuming figure of a man; and so we came to the copses near the Chateau of La Lovie.

In a laudable attempt at hiding our camp, though the whole Salient was an open secret, we had pitched our tents among thick undergrowth and some saplings. Orders had been given that the undergrowth was not to be cleared, and life in consequence had its little difficulties. At first to walk about the camp at night was simply foolish, for, if you had the courage to leave your tent, you either plunged into a bush, collided with a tree, or tripped over tent-ropes decently hidden in the vegetation. But man cannot live in a forest without itching to make some clearance — it is the instinct of the pioneer, — and before we had been long in the copse I am afraid that one or two of the more tempting bushes disappeared, paths were trodden, and the inevitable "temporary structures" were raised on what to all outward appearance had recently been young trees.

On the afternoon that we

arrived we came to the decision that we disliked heat and aeroplanes. There was no shade, unless you lay at full length under a bush, and innumerable aeroplanes — "Spads" — were ascending and descending from an enormous aerodrome close by. The flying men were in the cheeriest mood, and endeavoured always to keep us amused by low and noisy flying. I do not think that there is any aeroplane more consistently noisy than a "Spad."

At dusk we drove down to the ramp at Oosthoek Wood. The train backed in after dark. We brought off our tanks in great style, under the eye of the Brigade Commander, who was always present at these ceremonies. The enemy was not unkind. He threw over a few shells, but one only disturbed our operations by bursting on the farther side of the ramp and so frightening our company dog that we never saw her again.

There was no moon, and we found it difficult to drive our tanks into the wood without knocking down trees that made valuable cover. It was none too easy without light, which we did not wish to use, to fasten the camouflage nets above the tanks on to the branches. The track of the tanks from the ramp to the wood was strewn with branches and straw.

By the time we had finished the night had fled, and it was in the fresh greyness of dawn that we marched the weary miles to the camp at La Lovie. The men were dog-tired, my guide was not certain of the road, though he never missed it, and I had never realised the distance. After an interminable tramp we staggered into camp. The men were given some hot breakfast, and then, as the sun rose, you would have heard nothing but snores. For our sins we had arrived in a "back area" of the Salient.

That was on the 11th of July: the next twenty days were crammed full of preparations.

Every morning the men marched down to the wood, wondering a little if the shelling during the night had done any damage — and Oosthoek Wood was shelled every night. Gradually the tanks were "tuned" to the last note of perfection, the new Lewis guns were fired, and finally the tanks were taken out on a cloudy day to a field close by and the compasses adjusted by "swinging." Names and numbers were painted. Experiments were made with the new and not very satisfactory form of "unditching gear." Supplies of water, petrol, and ammunition were taken on board. Everything that the crews could do was done.

We were told soon after we had arrived in the Salient that during the first stages of the great battle "D" Battalion would remain in reserve. There was, in consequence, no need for us to make any elaborate reconnaissances of our own trench system, because by the

time we came into action it was probable that we should be beyond trenches and operating in the open country.

If a tank company is ordered to attack with the infantry on the first day of a battle, no reconnaissance can be too detailed and patient, for on the night before the attack a tank can do untold mischief. There are wires, light railways, emplacements, communication trenches, dug-outs to be avoided, and a specific spot to be reached at a given time. Tanks unfortunately are not allowed to roam wildly over the battlefield either before or during a battle. The route that a tank will take from the moment it starts to move up on the night before the battle to the moment it rallies after the battle is only a few yards wide. It is chosen after the most painstaking examination of aeroplane photographs and the daily reconnaissance of the enemy country. To our own front line the route is taped, and forward it should be taped —in the mind's eye of the tank commander.

Nor was it necessary for us to "liaise" with the infantry. Immediately a tank company commander learns that he is "going over" with a certain battalion of infantry, he begins at once to establish the closest possible "liaison." The infantry officers are entertained and shown over the tanks. A demonstration is arranged, and if time permits a dress rehearsal of the attack is carried out in order that there may be a thorough understanding between the tanks and the infantry. At the beginning of the Ypres battle combined tactics scarcely existed. The infantry attacked, the tanks helped, and the only question to be decided was whether the tanks went in front of the infantry or the infantry in front of the tanks. But even in July 1917 it was just as well to know personally the officers and men of the battalion concerned, although as late as September 1918 one Divisional Commander refused to tell his men that they would be attacking with tanks in case they should be disappointed if the tanks broke down before the battle.

We had only to reconnoitre the routes to the canal, and make a general study of the sector in which we might be engaged.

Nothing, I suppose, sounds more elementary than to take a marked map and follow a tank route from a large wood to a canal which cannot be avoided. In practice there are not a few little difficulties. First, it is necessary to extricate the tanks from the wood without knocking down the trees, which may later be required to shelter others from aeroplanes. This requires care and skill. Then the tanks proceed along a cart-track until the route crosses a main road by a camp, where it is necessary to swing sharply to avoid important wires and some huts. Beyond the main road we trek across a field or two until the track divides, and it is easy enough in the dark to bear to

the right instead of to the left. Then there is a ditch to cross, with marshy banks—a good crossing in dry weather, but doubtful after rain—and we mark an alternative. We come to a light railway, and this under no circumstances must be damaged. We arrange for it to be "ramped" carefully with sleepers, but it is just as well to carry a few spare sleepers in the tanks, because some heavy gunners live near by. The track, which by this time is two feet deep in mud, again divides, and bearing to the right we find that an ammunition column has camped across it. So we suggest that tanks through horse lines at night may produce dire results, and a narrow passage is cleared. Another main-road crossing and a bridge—we are doubtful about that bridge, and walk down the stream until we come to something more suitable to our weight. Along the route we look for woods, copses, or ruins, so that, if a tank breaks down, we may know the best cover for the night: you cannot afford to leave a tank lying about in the open, however skilfully you may camouflage it.

I shall never forget those hot arduous days when we tramped in the moist heat over all the possible routes, plunging, after it had rained, through sticky mud often up to our knees, setting up little signposts wherever it was possible to make a mistake, and wondering whether the car would meet us at the other end. . . .

The canal was a problem in itself. To live in a Salient under the eyes of the enemy is miserable enough, but when it is necessary to cross a canal to reach your own trenches life becomes intolerable.

The canal ran north and south from Ypres. It was an everyday canal, with dug-outs in its banks and three or four feet of mud and water at the bottom. It was crossed by a number of bridges, and on each the enemy gunners had been "registering" for two years, so that by July 1917 their fire had become moderately accurate. They knew it was necessary for you to cross the canal by a bridge, unless you went through Ypres, with the result that no man lingered on a bridge a moment longer than he must. Even our infantry, who would march steadily through a barrage, crossed the canal at the double, and yet were often caught.

With the tanks we determined to take no risks. Bridges might be—and often were—destroyed by a single shell, and it was decided to build two solid embankments. Immediately the sappers started the enemy discovered what was happening, and shelled the work without mercy by day and by night and dropped bombs, but resolutely the work went forward. Gang after gang of men were swept out of existence, but the sappers just set their teeth and hung on, until a few days before the battle the two embankments were well and properly built, and the little graveyard by divi-

sional headquarters was nearly filled.

In those days the German gunners gave us no peace. It was a magnificent duel between the two artilleries. The enemy knew, of course, that we were about to attack, and they determined that, if shells could spoil our preparations, our preparations should be spoiled. I believe we lost ten thousand men in the three weeks before the battle. We were consoled only by the thought that the enemy was getting more than he gave. It was pleasant, for instance, to find a long gun, whose sole object in life was to drop shells on the station at Roulers from dusk to dawn, particularly after a chance shell in Poperinghe had spoiled a little dinner at "Skindles," or a salvo into St Jean had distinctly delayed an important reconnaissance on a sweltering day. And the shelling of the canal was beyond a joke.

As I was a little anxious about the embankments, I decided to reconnoitre a passable route through the outskirts of Ypres round the "dead end" of the canal. It was a typical day. Cooper and I motored to within a mile, and then, leaving our car under the shelter of some trees, walked boldly ahead along the road to the "dead end." There was no shelling near—it was a pleasant quiet morning. We noticed, however, that the enemy had been active very recently. The road was covered with fresh branches and dirt. The shell-holes were suspiciously new. We crossed the two bridges over filthy branches of the canal, and, having satisfied ourselves that they would easily bear tanks, we walked down to the quayside and stopped for a moment to light our pipes, with mutual congratulations that we had chosen such a calm morning.

We did not then know the neighbourhood. We barely heard a shell before it dropped neatly on the farther bank. We decided to push on down the canal, but a little barrage drove the inhabitants of the canal into their dug-outs. Finally, the salvos of H.E. shrapnel made the quayside a place to be avoided, and we retired hastily into a strong shelter where some jolly gunners offered us tea. They belonged to a 6-inch howitzer battery a little distance away, and already they had lost two-thirds of their men, and two of their howitzers had received direct hits.

We waited for twenty minutes. There is nothing more difficult, and at the same time more easy, than to take cover until a "strafe" stops. Probably, if you walk straight on, as you intended, you will not only be just as safe as you are under cover, but you will add to your self-respect and rise in the estimation of your fellow-prisoners. On the other hand, there is no hurry, and the enemy cannot go on for ever. Why not wait until he stops? Still, as a major you should set a good example, and not take any notice of a few shells. Yes, but they are large shells, and you are perfectly

certain that the last one fell exactly on the road. Now, if we had been there——

Twice we started and twice we were driven in. Then at last we made up our minds that the shelling was dying down, and we began to walk back over the bridges, which had been hit at least twice since we had crossed them. I heard something come very, very quickly, and I do not mind confessing that I ducked. It exploded in the back of the house which we were passing. We walked a little more rapidly, and strained our ears for the next. We just heard it, and this time we flung ourselves down, and the dirt and bits of things came pattering down on to us. I looked at Cooper. There was agreement in his eye. We ran for our lives. . . . That was our final reconnaissance on the 28th July.

After mess on the 30th, I strolled out with Cooper to the corner of the main road. It was dusk, and the coolness was sweet. We waited, and then battalion after battalion came swinging round the corner, where guides stood with lanterns. Some of the men were whistling, a few were singing, and some, thinking of the battle or their homes, had set faces. Soon it became too dark to distinguish one man from another, and I thought it as well. What did it matter if one man was singing and another brooding over the battle to come? They were shadowy figures, dark masses, just so many thousand infantrymen marching to the battle, just so many units to kill or be killed. One grave is the same as any other, and one infantryman should be the same as any other; for it is difficult to endure war, and at the same time to think of the fear, the love, the songs, the hope, the courage, the devices of the men who fight. There is nothing noble, glorious, or romantic in war, unless you forget the souls of the men. . . .

The squealing mules with their clattering limbers plunged round the corner, and we returned to our tents. It was hard to sleep. In a few hours there was a momentary silence. Then right along the line an uneasy drone broke the stillness—the weary tank crews had started their engines, and the barrage fell with a crash on the German trenches.

(To be continued.)

"THE FRIEND OF FA HIEN."

BY EDMUND CANDLER.

How I came to be dining with a learned society does not concern my story. Any kind of "shop" attracts me. My hobby is other people's hobbies—a kind of catholic curiosity which ensures a general ignorance. One's head may swim with unrelated facts, but after all it is a spiritual adventure to live for a moment in a world of new suggestion, though one may know all the while that the glimpse one gets is merely a glimpse. The skimmer naturally reveres the savant. I could listen for hours to the man who cannot be confuted about sea-spiders.

It was a piece of luck that I, a young man with no erudite pretensions, should be at the dinner at all. My host, the only man in the room who knew me, was sitting at a comfortable distance near the eminent foreign visitor. On my left was old Colonel Follett, retired from the Indian Survey, a little old man with a bright red face and white hair and blue eyes like a sailor's. He reminded me of a warm and well-fed cock-robin in the snow. A very compact and soldierly and well-groomed little man. Outwardly you might have taken him for an old-fashioned stage colonel with all the conventional limitations. He was scrupulous in the part, thinking perhaps that it was expected of him, as is often the case with men who have lived all their lives in uncivilised places. When they retire and deserve a little rest they pay out their imagined obligations to society with both hands. It would not have occurred to me at first sight that Follett had earned his K.C.I.E. with his brains, nevertheless he was a mint of erudition. There was nothing he did not know about the North-West Frontier, and he had been on every Boundary Commission since Penjdeh.

Next to Follett sat Sellinger, the archæologist, also elderly and small, but far from soldier-like. Comparing the direction of their eyes, the obvious inference was that one had been used to watching horizons, the other the ground at his feet. The Seleucidæ were Sellinger's pet hobby; but he had a passion for old roads—Roman roads, Greek roads, ancient trade routes. He had never been out of Europe, but he knew Asia as if he carried a relief map in his head. He could have told you the exact spot where a trader going east from Samarcand, in the third century B.C., would run up against the Chinese frontier guards in Khotan, and how much cloth he would have to leave behind to get through, and what proportion of it was likely to find its way into

the Imperial Customs chest. Stein's wonderful discoveries in Chinese Turkestan were his preoccupation of the moment. He and Follett were old cronies: they had crossed swords in many a controversy.

The numismatist on my right was a Semitic-looking man with a beak like one of his own Menanders. He only spoke twice; once was to ask me the English for *crevettes*. At this early point in the menu Follett and Sellinger had already disagreed. They were talking of some Buddhist remains that had been found south of Gupis. A Russian who had no business there had stumbled on a stupa and a frieze of Boddhisattvas carved in the rock. Follett argued that it was an old Buddhist colony; Sellinger that it was part of a pilgrim route: all the remains in that country, he said, had been left by people passing through—there were no settlements. But Follett pointed out that there was no trace of a route north or south; it was an isolated country, probably connected with the Darêl Valley to the west; the nullah in which the remains had been discovered was a veritable *cul-de-sac*, leading nowhere. But Sellinger would not hear of a colony.

"I believe it was a Fa Hien route," he said.

Follett leant back in his chair. A far-away look came into his eyes as if he were searching for a snow-line obscured in cloud behind the waiter whom he transfixed with his stare.

"No," he said, "Fa Hien crossed the Helmund down into Swat. Then he went into Afghanistan. Don't you remember the festival of Buddha's skull-bone? That was at Hidda near Jalalabad. I was there with Kingsway in '75."

"But didn't he make two journeys?"

Follett could not remember. They forgot the Gupis difference and began to talk of Fa Hien. Sellinger scratched his itinerary on the table-cloth. He was three years at Patna, where he found the Vinaya. He was three or four years finding the rules of discipline, and, I think, six in copying them out. Then he was in Ceylon.

"Yes, and Gaya. He was the first man of Han the priests had seen at Gaya."

"He was back in China about 415. He must have been away fifteen years."

"It was the other pilgrim who was so impressed with the rites at Gaya that he would not return to Han. He must have been a ritualist like Vaile." Follett indicated a deep-browed priest at the end of the table. "Merely to watch the dignified movements of the monks made his life complete. You remember his prayer—'From this time forth till I come to the state of Buddha let me not be born in a barbarous frontier land.'"

They discussed the psychology of pilgrims. Was there any sentiment mixed up with their devotion? Follett thought

not. "The Chinaman is not sentimental," he said. "Is any Asiatic? Home-sick, perhaps. You remember the scene in Ceylon by the image of jade when Fa Hien saw a merchant present a fan of white silk and 'tears of sorrow filled his eyes and fell down.' It was the first Chinaman he had seen for years. He was often melancholy." Then Sellinger described Fa Hien's emotion at the place where Buddha delivered the Sutra, when the pilgrim could hardly restrain his tears at the thought that he, Fa Hien, was born when he could not meet with the Lord Buddha, and that now he only saw the footprints he had left and the place where he lived and no more.

There was a spray of almond blossom in the epergne through which I watched Sellinger's eye scanning the mutilated table-cloth—or rather his nose. It was a long, cold, groovey nose—it looked cold—thin in the bridge, flattened into the cheeks, the lip poised like a rat's at the bars of a cage, at an angle that tells of eyes furtive, peeping, uneasy; only when they rested on you a second you could recognise their timid kindliness, their restless curiosity. I could see that he was moved, my own heart was thumping. There was no need of the almond blossom to carry me away to Gilgit, to the orchard with the purling stream in it and the hoopoes and magpies and the tall poplars limned against the snows. I had never heard the name of Fa Hien, but I felt as if I knew the man. I had lived fifteen days with the spook of such a pilgrim in those snows, just such a pilgrim as Fa Hien.

It was at Gilgit in '97 that I met Mayne-Torkington. I was stationed there; he had come up with a permit to shoot. Torks, as we called him, was not a bad fellow, only a little aggressive and too full of himself. I had been at the same school just after he left and had heard a great deal of his prowess. There was a story that he had cut a sheep in half with one blow of a sword—and other yarns not much more credible. At Sandhurst they called him Mayne-Chance. I have never known any one quite so ambitious. He had the makings of a fine soldier—very prompt and sure of himself and confident in everything except the proper valuation of his own parts by other people. He had just enough tact not to "show off," but I was always conscious of the emulous side to his nature. Faults of youth! I have seen men of his kind turn modest when they have done something. The trouble was that he was unblooded. He was spoiling for "a show." He had left British cavalry for native, and native cavalry for one of the best native infantry regiments on the frontier—it seemed the only chance—and he had given up his leave twice on the merest rumour of trouble. And here he was at Gilgit, not in the best of tempers, waiting for a telegram from Srinagar about the nullah he was going to shoot in. It

seems there had been a muddle and there was another claimant, an S. and T. man who arrived the day after. Torks was barely civil. Things were certainly difficult, and smoothness of relations was preserved only by the exercise of what is called in the mess "artificial tact." Then the telegram came. Torks got his nullah, and the S. and T. man another one almost as good. We were glad to see the backs of both of them.

Two days after Torks had gone there came a wire recalling him. There had been a rising in the Tirah, and his regiment was ordered to the front. It fell to me to find him and send him back. Incidentally I had the reversion of his nullah, and I was given six weeks' leave. I caught him up one morning when he had breakfasted late. He had located the herd. Of course he was on the track of the biggest markhor he had ever seen, but he greeted me none the less as the bringer of the very best of good tidings. And he was so expansively friendly that he made me feel it would be selfish of me if I did not turn back with him, just for the one march, and celebrate his luck over the bottle of "phiz" which had been destined for the obsequies of that 58-inch head. After all the nullah was mine, and, with any luck, the markhor. I saw the great lyrate horns lying horizontally on the rock. I would get the shot in broad-sides just as the beast lifted his head. He would leap in the air, two or three bounds, and then crumple up. Already I enjoyed Lor Khan's smile in anticipation. The horns would emerge from the largest khilta like a ladder. I followed them in my mind's eye all the way down the Gilgit road—an easy landmark when I scanned the track to discern how far my coolies were from camp. I even saw them into the train at Pindi. I do not think Torks wasted a thought on the head. His only concern was whether it would be quicker to strike the Indus at Chilas and cross the Babusar to Khagan and Abbotabad, or to drop down by the Luthu Pass to Talliche Ferry below Bunji and take the Gilgit road into Kashmir.

I began to grudge him my company on that first march. It was a blazing-hot day, and the refraction from the rocks made my eyes ache. Torks was one of those irritating fellows who insist on giving their companion a lead. Directly I caught him up he forged ahead. Soon I grew tired of the effort, and was content to keep him in view. It was three o'clock in the afternoon when I saw him stop by a little rivulet in the grass. He lay flat on his stomach, and seemed to be drinking or bathing his head in the stream. I sat down with relief and lighted a pipe; I lay on my back and hoped he would not go on. I was tired and hot, and my feelings towards Torks had quite changed since breakfast. I did not like the way he had ladled out the jam on the top

of his butter, which was at least a quarter of an inch thick. Least of all did I like that strenuous posterior view of him—all emulous buttock it seemed to me, as I panted behind. These jealous walkers are the very devil.

I had a good smoke, and, I believe, a doze; I felt more at peace with the world; I had almost forgotten my morbid ruminations. When I looked up, Torks was still there. It seemed hardly possible. He looked as if he were still lapping up the stream. When I saw his hat had fallen off, and he did not take the trouble to put it on, though the sun was blazing, I guessed there was something wrong and ran towards him. I found him unconscious. I turned him over on his back, covered his head, sprinkled his face with water, and waited. I was not greatly disturbed. At 16,000 feet your head buzzes if you stoop, a stumble makes you giddy, sounds are confused, the hum of a bee on the thyme by your ear might be an avalanche, or your friend calling, or God knows what. I knew exactly what Torks felt like when he was bowled over. It is like being shot or knocked on the head with a sword—nothing matters less. You don't feel any pain or think of your soul, like the hero in a novel, or of the people you are leaving behind. You only wonder why you are spinning round like a top, and why the grass and flowers by your head are gyrating like catherine-wheels in concentric circles, pink and white and green and yellow. You don't a bit remember who you are, and if you die you are as good as in another incarnation before you know you have left this. I did not worry about Torks. I lighted my pipe again, and gave him another ten minutes to come round.

But I had not reckoned on the sun. All that night, and the day after and the next day, he was delirious. He babbled incoherently and groaned in pain. When peace came to him on the third morning he was stark staring mad. He was not violent or excitable. He was even placid, more placid than the real Torks, but obstinate—more obstinate, if that could be, and ridden by some fixed idea. I could not gather what it was. He would not talk, and nothing I said to him made any impression. When I spoke to him of his regiment on service he looked at me vacantly. The only manifestation of mind in him was his sense of direction; in this he was very definite and clear. And it was the wrong direction: he insisted on going back, and I dared not thwart him. At first I thought it was the markhor.

I whispered the word in his ear, drew a picture of the horns in the sand, pointed my khud-stick like a rifle, but none of these suggestions awoke any intelligent glimmer in his eye. On the second day he passed the entrance to the nullah, where the herd was, like a

man walking in his sleep: it was as if he were being sucked north. Things began to look black. We were not provisioned for an expedition to the Karakoram.

That night Lor Khan and I tried to tie him up and carry him, but he was stronger than the two of us. And I soon had to call Lor Khan off, as it was not pleasant to see a Chilasi man-handle a sahib. I closed with Torks alone. He did not strike, but wrestled with a slow, cool, passionless strength and cunning which made me feel as if I were in the coils of a snake. I slept ill after it. The next day I fell into the glum procession again.

I soon forgot to be sorry for Torks. I began to hope that as we went north into the Pamirs we might blunder on some Russian guard who would be strong enough to arrest us and carry us back. It seemed the only way out. But on the fourth day, after crossing two pointless ridges, he struck west. He never had any hesitation about the way. And I soon ceased to care. There are worse things than being led about by a lunatic on the Roof of the World. A change came over Torks: I began to feel that he was happy, though his manners were queer.

We spent some eerie nights under the stars. He would not sleep in his tent, but rolled himself up in blankets under a rock. When I woke in the full moonlight I could see that his eyes were open. He lay and gazed peacefully into the sky. He did not care to sleep. The spirit of the mountains was on him. If his mind was ranging I could swear that it ranged like his body on some consistent path: his dreams were coherent. The vacant look had left him; his gaze was sometimes intense. He seemed to me more perverse than mad.

It was a gentle perversity, and by all civilised standards I was not much saner than Torks. The spirit of the mountains had entered us both. One falls into a kind of *yoga* when one has nothing to do in these hills but to walk and sleep and think. There is something in the earth or the air or the solitude. I do not know what it is: nine-tenths of the people of the earth who live higher than 14,000 feet are Buddhists. The mountains almost talk you into it. In the quiet of the night you listen to their voices: you are drawn into the brooding immensity all round you. The "fallings from us, vanishings, blank misgivings of a creature," become part of the nightly dream. Then as the slough of immediate cares and preoccupations slips away, the spirit expands, wider cycles of consciousness are opened out, deeper shafts of memory. The stars come out; the moon rises behind some jagged rock; a great planet dips his torch in the sleeping lake at your feet; shadows gather and deepen and pass away like the dreams of God.

In warm cities, where men huddle together, one must have

something to cling to: a personal Saviour, tendrils everywhere, a straight path for one's feet, a lantern in a sure and kindly hand, comforting voices in the dark. But here you do not seek, you know. It is all the difference between being led by the hand across a stony ford, and being carried out by a great wave, drifting with the waters. Self vanishes. There is a mystic purpose in nature with which you are concerned—remotely, not individually; you must float with the tide, a ripple in the eternal wave, a ripple that forms and breaks and forms again. It is not that you are unheeded—the single detached "you." You may dream apart, but you are one with all the seeds of the grasses and the little round stones, unprivileged.

Here I was shaken from my clouds, precipitated to earth. The numismatist was speaking to me, asking for something. There was a dish of salted almonds out of his reach. I hope he forgave my abstraction. The sigh of the wind, the song of falling water gave place to the babble of contented diners. The expansive white shirt-front of the distinguished foreign visitor loomed large at the end of the table; seen through the almond blossom in the epergne it evoked another fleeting vision of the orchard at Gilgit and Dubanni sparkling through the boughs. The two old men on my left were deep in some new controversy.

"The Mont Cenis! Impossible!"

"But the Col du Clapier——"

They were talking about Hannibal. I looked at the menu. I must have consumed two courses since the *crevettes*. I had been eating mechanically like Torks.

I remember the queer ideas he developed about food. At first he ate what he found in his plate. Then he abjured the products of tins: it seemed a very natural fastidiousness in a sick man. Later he turned with disgust from a well-cooked snow partridge which I dropped on his plate frizzling from the pan. He never gave up porridge, biscuits, chapaties, but he became more degenerate in his tastes. He would not touch solid food except between sunrise and noon. One day I found him grubbing up some dry old rusty-coloured rhubarb stalks which no sahib would have eaten, and peeling them to make a stew. He washed his hands in sand.

I think the memory of Torks' rhubarb must have given me zest for the "Sarcelle à la reine Zénobie." I remembered to offer the numismatist the cayenne. Sellinger and Follett were back again at Gupis; Hannibal's business had been settled. I heard old Follett say, "There never has been a road; the country is practically uninhabited—a few Goojars[1] perhaps — but there is not even a village." How I wished I could bring in

[1] Herdsmen.

Torks,—not the spruce Mayne-Torkington, who, I happened to know, was dining in a Service Club—it was the anniversary of Kila Drosh—at the other end of the street, —but the real Torks of my pilgrimage. For Torks did become articulate. One morning I was standing on a spur looking across a deep nullah and wondering where we were going to camp. Some high ridge always seemed to bisect the arbitrary line he had in his head. I was wishing he would follow the trend of the valleys more, when I felt his hand on my sleeve. His touch made me start. He spoke; I felt like Balaam; my heart thumped. His voice was husky; I almost dreaded to hear him speak, remembering the gurgle in his throat when we wrestled; he had hardly uttered a sound since. But he was human enough now; he pointed to a camel-humped peak which fell away on our side in a precipitous scree, and he conveyed to me by some strange phrase that we would find pictures there.

Pictures! It was an odd fancy. I wondered, were these pictures the phantoms in his head? Did he imagine that the scree beneath the humped peak would aid his vision in some subtle way? To me there was the one picture drawn daily by the sun, the great ring of the mountains all round us. In the evening the circle narrows; the hills draw in nearer; the little figures peep from the rock-rim silent, conscious, intent. There is a moment when you can almost see their features set off against the pearly orange light behind. Night falls, and the ring narrows again into the dark walls of a pit. The roof takes on a new majesty. The stars shine and sing. I have no doubt Torks heard the music of the spheres, and I, if I had not been a finished and finite clod, might have heard it too.

The wonderful thing was that there really were pictures. Torks would go pressing on, and it was almost dark when we reached a kind of col in the ridge. We saw them first by starlight, and by a three-day-old crescent moon—wasp-waisted haloed Boddhisattvas —the figures were strange to me then—deep cut in the rock. There were remains of steps, and an elephant, and a wheel. Torks fingered them lovingly long after the wraith of a moon had set. And in the morning there were new wonders. I found a kind of intaglio, full-breasted women looking down from some fruit-laden balcony, and on the rock, quite close to my head where I had been sleeping, a leopard had been chasing an antelope all night.

From that hour I hunted with Torks. Responsibility fell from me like a slough. I was his disciple, his chela; his eerie obsessions weighed on me no more. I forgot the markhor; the Tirah became the most distant dream. Up there fact and illusion merge: there is no sane or insane; one's mind is like the wind,

sweeping over all matter, filling all space, indifferent to mood or time, ranging ceaselessly, pent nowhere. No thought born of consciousness can merits disrepect.

When we left the pictures we turned south. Our new track was parallel with the Darêl Valley to the west, and the Gilgit road to the east. We were hurrying now as before when I followed the untranslated Torks to his first camp, and in the same direction—but with how different a motive. I lived only for the day. Physically I was as sound in lung and muscle as a man can be, and in mind as happy as a lotus-eater, though with a more lively intoxication. The hazy abstraction in which I moved was shot with a divine curiosity, a kind of far-away suggestion like a happy recurrent dream that floats across one's half-awakened consciousness.

The pictures had unloosened my companion's tongue. In the next camp over our juniper fire he began to talk. He was wandering, but wandering coherently, where I could not gather. He babbled strange names. Sometimes he complained of his head. I thought of

> "The lost traveller's dream under the hill."

But Torks was not lost; he had the most uncanny notion of the way. Once I thought he had missed his bearings. He would not follow what seemed the obvious line south, the line of least resistance, but made a steep traverse over a flanking spur to the west. When I stood on the col between the two valleys I saw that he was right: the country directly south was impossible; and, as if to remind us that we were following a path once worn by many feet, just where we dipped down between two rocks there was another of Torks' pictures—a Buddha with hands lifted up in benediction. I found my friend kneeling on the ground tearing the dry moss out of the grooves. The picture grew under his hand; he might have been the sculptor. The green and sulphury lichen that had overgrown it fell in flakes; ringing the halo there was a milk-white saxifrage, whiter than the snow above, and a small Veronica had grown in Buddha's feet, dark blue all over except the lip, which was the lightest skiest blue imaginable. Torks had no feeling for these flowers, he tore them out and flung them roughly on the ground. I left him kneeling there when I saw Lor Khan and his weary crew toiling up the pass. Somehow I had begun to feel shy of my friend in front of these men.

But Torks made one mistake. We came to a gorge where the cliffs fell from high bluffs precipitously into the stream. The road, if there had been one, was gone. Poor Torks! He looked pained and perplexed standing there irresolutely like a hound that has lost the scent. He made one or two hazardous attempts on the rock face, but he was

plainly beaten. We had to turn back. It meant a stiff climb and a detour of three days to a snow bridge farther north. But there were rock-carvings by the stream; I think the track must have followed it once, carried along the almost perpendicular cliffs by one of those zigzag galleries —the kind of terrifying succession of step- and ladder-work that is found in Hunza to-day. You hang over a torrent raging hundreds of feet below, poised on some loose slab of stone, or clinging to a pine branch jammed precariously into a fissure of the rock. There is seldom hold for hand and foot at the same time. I thanked God that Torks' road had gone.

We hurried again after this. I gathered that Torks wanted to get to some place for a summer retreat. It was days before we came to any more relics, but I discovered what had happened to the road. There had been a great landslip which must have carried it away a few miles beyond the galleries. I could see the place from a high spur we crossed. We cannot have been many days' journey here from the Darêl Valley to the west and the country of the Dards. My friend was very silent until we picked up the vestiges of the path again,—a frescoed band of Buddhas carved in the rock, a lion with a curled mane, figures with drapery and jewelled necklaces, a fierce yaksha with trunk and talon, and little djinns—the guardians of the passes. When we came on these things I felt a strange elation. Torks behaved very oddly. I found him grubbing up the root of a blue flower, a kind of succory; at night he burnt it and it gave out a sweet scent like incense. Once I made him very angry. I shot a marmot. I felt rather a cad myself, but it was a long shot and I did not expect to hit it. I brought the furry little beast into camp. Torks was peeling his rotten rhubarb when he looked up and saw the wound and the blood. "You killed it?" he asked. There was a pained look in his eyes, and something in his voice which made me feel a very low ignoble person indeed. Then he began to talk. It was the first time he had spoken to me connectedly more than three words at once, though he had discoursed much with himself. Not only did he make me feel pity for the brown warm-coated beast, he made me feel an assassin. I had slain the albatross. The marmot is the friend of pilgrims. When he comes to the side of the path and pipes and bows in hospitable manner, it is a good omen; when he shuns the traveller and whistles from his mound a long way off, it bodes ill to all who pass. "You killed it!" He did not speak a word more that evening, or the next day, or the day after.

After a few days we came upon a goojars' encampment. The relics of the path had become fainter and fainter, and soon we lost it altogether. We had not seen a rock-carving since the lion with the curled

mane. One morning Lor Khan took me aside and pointed to a triple peak a day or two to the south. "That stands over the Luthu Pass," he said; "the road drops down from it to Talliche Ferry on the Indus." My friend was becoming more and more difficult to understand. He followed us now. Sometimes there would be a glimpse of the old Torks—a kind of chastened Mayne-Torkington purged of pride. Then he would relapse into the reverent pilgrim, but an uncertain perplexed pilgrim now with no sure instinct for the path. Often he seemed merely apathetic. His bullet neck had lost its stiffness since the stroke. As I followed in his wake, I fancied—it was probably only fancy—that I could tell by the way he carried his neck, as the muscles seemed to stiffen or relax, which way his mind was ranging, in what character I would find him next.

Sometimes I would talk to him of his regiment. He knew they were on service, but he did not seem to care. I remember one night we were lying in a cup from which we looked up a precipitous gully to the snows. We were down in the forest again. The stars came out, the white peaks were shining mysteriously above the sombre pines; it was the kind of night in which a nun in a high convent would sing, or a mountain shepherd take thought of his relations with God. If Torks had burst into some strange psalm, I should not have wondered. Instead, he spoke of his dreams, or what he thought were his dreams. I thought of the old lama at Galdang-Tso, who used to point up at the high buttresses of Leo Porgyul and say, "Up there one remembers." He filled my head with pictures. He spoke of a place where there was a yellow bone under a glass on a raised dais, and an everlasting line of monks came up and prostrated themselves before it, striking their foreheads on the ground, while the priests of the place blew trumpets, beat drums, and clashed cymbals. There was a high tower on which a man stood with his robes flapping in the wind, and blew a long, shrill, wailing blast on a conch-shell. He described the line of booths all the way to the gate of the enclosure, and the stalls at which men sold incense and flowers in little wicker baskets, and the rich warm scent of it, and the beggars with their monotonous drone, handless men, some of them from a country where the prince cut off both hands. They held the bowl between their knees, and the pilgrims threw in grains of rice as they passed.

And he told me how he had seen a king ploughing, a delicate solemn little man, with a long beard and a pink silk robe and naked feet. He ploughed a furrow on four sides of a square of land, which was marked at the corners with silken streamers on poles, and hanging water-lilies in gold and silver; and all the monks, a thousand of them, sat on a mound of sand near

by in rows according to their order. The great white oxen had gold tips to their horns, and their brows were painted, and they looked old and wise and reverend. The plough was very light and had a gilded handle, but the king could not turn it at the corners of the field until a man sprang out and diverted the cattle with a cry. And then, when he had finished, servants ran up and fanned him with a peacock-feather fan, and rubbed his ankles, and wiped the earth from his feet. He looked tired. Afterwards he feasted all the monks, and in the evening they went back to their low and narrow beds. Torks told me he thought the king was giving the land.

And there was a car-festival somewhere in the south. Such a scattering of flowers, and lighting of lamps, and burning of incense, and spreading of canopies, — wonderful, four-wheeled image cars with dragon-eared shafts and priests following with wing-like fans, which they held up like sun-shades. The oddest thing was to hear Torks, who never had the bump of reverence, speak about deportment. There was much ceremony in his dreams. He described the dignified carriage of the priests, the grave orderly way in which they walked into the hall at the sound of the bell, their bowings and prostrations, the silent meals, when the monks did not speak but made signs with their hands, and how their throats were silent too when they ate, and they made no noise with their alms bowls. All this seemed to touch his heart. You would think demureness, respect, gravity, a scrupulous adherence to etiquette were his ideals. One night he talked a lot of Dagon nonsense about other priests—false priests, whose lights were put out, and whose tables and shrines were miraculously upset, and swept clean of heretical accretions by the true divinity in the night. He would not answer my questions, but fell asleep with his chin on his knees by the log-fire, and in the morning he would not talk of anything.

"But have you any evidence that there was a University at Taxila?"

Sellinger's gentle academic intonation brought me to earth again. I looked at the menu, and saw that I was eating Crême d'Ananas. The two old pundits had been ranging like Torks. They had been at Balkh, and sealed the rock of Aornos, and now they were back with Fa Hien. Torks could have told them if there had been a University at Taxila.

I think the three days when we were dropping down towards the Indus were the happiest of all. Torks was tractable; he would smoke his pipe with me; he was reasonable about his meals. And he liked talking about his visions: he was quite detached from them now. We would lie down for an hour or two for lunch in the middle of the day. I remember one dry little hollow under a rock where we

lay on a carpet of pine-needles, and the little eyebright and the dead saxifrage, whose leaves are withered up by the sun into black ashes. Soothed by the hum of the bees and a gentle caressing wind through the pines, he took up the story again of those other wanderings in which I had not shared. Up there, he told me, the waters were becoming salt, and everything was drying up. He spoke of the White Rock and the Blue Sea and the Mountain of Piled-up Stones as if I knew them. He had been traversing interminable barren tracts, swept by the hot winds of the desert—the poisonous dragon winds—and storms of flying sand and gravel—a land in which one found the way only by the scattered bones of the dead. It had been such a battle of the spirit that he had come to think of these forces of nature as consciously malignant. In the desert and in the high passes he had walked tremblingly, and had not dared to disturb them with a sound.

The illusions would come and go. On the last two days he seemed to be living in the moment only, or very faintly in the past. For the morrow he cared nothing. I gave up trying to make him realise whither he was bound and on what errand. We were looking down on the yellow swirling Indus from the cliff above Tallichi Ferry, when he turned to me and said—

"We used to go down to the river by hanging-ladders. I remember we went into the heat and the flies, but it was only for one day. . . . There was a ladder down to the river, and we crossed by a skin raft drawn by swimming horses. . . . I can't make this out. . . ."

Was he thinking of the Helmund? I wondered. After that he spoke no more of his dreams. I doubt if he remembered them.

In the evening when we reached the Ramghat bungalow I knew that my charge was over. I think it was the bed and doors and windows, and the stolid Chilasi levy, and the lucerne patch outside, and the commissariat weighing-machine, that brought things back to him. He swore at his khansamah because the goat was tough, and threatened to "hammer" the commissariat babu who refused at first to give *atta* to the men without a permit from Gilgit. Happily that trembling official yielded. When I woke up in the morning Torks was outside weighing himself in his pyjamas.

"Twelve stone — ten," he called out cheerily. And he was as hard and finely drawn as a race-horse. He came smiling into the verandah.

"I say, old man, I am afraid I must have given you a fearful lot of *dik*. Touch of the sun, wasn't it? I suppose I have been balmy. We must push this kit on. I want to get into Astor to-night."

His high rangings had improved the man.

"What have I been yapping about?" he asked.

"At first it was dragons," I told him, "and then you raved about deportment."

"Oh, rot, no! It was not as bad as all that?"

An hour later I saw him canter over the iron bridge and disappear round a bend in the opposite cliff. I had never felt so friendly disposed to him before. He was late in joining, but he made up for it. He behaved in the most unmonklike manner. He got his brevet and a D.S.O., an honestly earned one, and every one knew it. He took a fort nearly unaided. He and a handful of his men rushed the door. Then when he had been shot through the left shoulder and his revolver was empty and he had no time to reload, he picked up the sword of a dead Ghazi—"old Ginger" perhaps, whom the new-blooded Tommy would go and have "another dig at" in the evening after he had cleaned his bayonet. Torks rushed an inner door and cut the first man open from "the chaps to the chine"—like the sheep at school. Then he went down through loss of blood and got another bullet scratch on his left ear as he fell. His falling probably saved him, but the fort was his then. That was at Kila Drosh. Torks is a modest man now.

. . . . . .

"Gentlemen. The King!"

The speeches were imminent. The distinguished foreign guest was to receive more distinction. In the meanwhile I had behaved like a bear. I hope the numismatist put it down to youthful modesty. As for Follett and Sellinger, I need have no qualms about them. Follett evidently felt guilty of neglecting me, and after dessert, when he discovered that I was on leave from India, he became most genially reminiscent. I led him on to Bunji and Gilgit and then dropped my secret quite casually—no doubt with something of the accent of Balaam's ass. Follett was dumb for a moment; then he turned to Sellinger.

"Sellinger! Sellinger! my friend here has discovered some more Buddhist remains north of the Indus, somewhere south of Bodienski's stupa."

But my pride was a little allayed when he added—

"And you did not realise the importance of them?"

"Well, you see," I explained, "all the Swat country is full of them, and at Gilgit——"

"Yes, yes! But these are most significant. Between the Darêl and the Gilgit Valleys!"

It was a proud moment in the club library when I put the two savants on to the road. The atlas was no good: unfortunately all that country was beyond the survey, but we soon had a pile of Central Asian travel-books down from the shelves, and were poring over different maps. None of them helped us much, and I began to draw a chart on a piece of club paper. I showed them where we found the first rock-carvings, and where the road was broken, and where we struck on it again.

"YOU see," I explained. "I was in a hurry, my shikari

had a good eye for the country, and we followed the line of least resistance. I think we must have covered a part of the old road nearly every day except after that break." I said nothing of Torks.

"You must have hit on a continuation of Bodienski's track," Sellinger said.

"But why was it ever abandoned," Follett broke in, "if there was a road?"

"The landslip?" Sellinger suggested.

"Perhaps. That would explain. It was a short cut. Afterwards the route would naturally be deflected west to the Darêl Valley."

"You see, there can have been no settlement." Sellinger's eyes rested on me for a second with a modest, almost deprecating blink of triumph.

"One naturally associated these Gupis finds with Darêl." Follett adjusted his eyeglass and succeeded in looking as if he did not know that the bottom had fallen out of his argument.

Sellinger smiled. He could afford to be generous. "It is really the most extraordinary coincidence meeting you here—now," he said, turning to me. "We might have been talking to the friend of Fa Hien."

I was becoming naïvely happy. Then, as the waiter came in with three bubbling whiskies-and-sodas, old Follett, who had returned to his map, jerked round to me again.

"Now, what is your opinion about Hannibal?" he said with a flattering suggestion of confraternity. "It seems that the Col du Clapier——"

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

A GANG OF SLAVES—OUR NEW DESPOT—THE TESTIMONY OF SWIFT—THE NEED OF AN OPPOSITION—THE ANTICS OF THE CENTRE PARTY—THE LESSON OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—THE ILLUMINATI—THE GERMAN ALWAYS A SPARTACIST—OUR TWO WARNINGS—THE JEWISH DOMINATION—THE SCANDAL OF THE CIVIL LIST PENSION—A BONE TO A DOG.

In the far-off days before the war, the crimes and follies of government by party were ever before us. The insincerity of the system was obvious to us all. We knew that there was precious little difference between the Ins and the Outs. We regarded it as an outrage upon our forbearance to be asked to distinguish between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. When, with the complete approval of the Tory leaders, the House of Lords meekly accepted the Trades Disputes Bill, and even pretended to congratulate itself that it had thrown the burden of responsibility upon the Commons, without endangering the prospects of the Tory party, we knew that, as a bulwark against the encroaching lawlessness, the Upper Chamber was no more. And what distressed the observer of politics more acutely than the cunning tricks of the politicians, was their solidarity. The House of Commons was united in itself against the world. Within the walls of Westminster Palace there reigned a kind of Freemasonry, unassailed and irresistible. The stoutest Tory regarded the most reckless Radical as knit closer to him in the bonds of friendship than any poor devil outside could be, who had not received a licence from the people to sprawl at large, with his hat over his eyes, in the House of Commons. From this solidarity it followed that the debates of the politicians bore the same relation to the art of government as manœuvres bear to the art of war. The acrimony of the speakers was merely simulated, and it meant so little that the protagonists in a parliamentary battle were seen after the fight to dine together, and were heard to call one another by their Christian names. In public they assailed one another with all the resources of bitter invective. In private—and in private they were sincere—they openly professed the kind of friendship, offensive and defensive, which commonly unites the members of a Freemasons' Lodge or of an intimate club.

Thus it was that the politicians became actors all. They performed, as they believed, for the pride of the constituents and the benefit of themselves. The poor country provided the drama

and the setting, and received no penny by way of royalty. The press treated the politicians as it treats actors, and supplied an idle public with pictures of Chancellors and Secretaries of State wandering sadly in ill-fitting frock-coats along Whitehall. It is not strange, then, that the unreality of party politics wearied and disgusted the people. The play enjoyed too long a run, and there was a constant demand for a new drama and a fresh company.

The war brought with it what nothing but a war could have brought — a Coalition. Had the Tories been in office in 1914, they would have been asked to fight not only the Germans, but a united and noisy Opposition at home. By a stroke of good fortune the Radicals held the reins of power when the Germans invaded Belgium, and the Tory party, by throwing all its weight into the scale of war, saved England and Europe with it. When the Coalition came, it came not to avoid the dangers of friction, but to strengthen the Cabinet with men of greater courage and better knowledge. And the Coalition is still omnipotent, though peace has been signed at Versailles, though it has long outlived its excuse and its usefulness.

Meanwhile, we have had a chance of discovering what is the result of abolishing what once seemed the greatest curse possible—government by party. Instead of a House of Commons, free once upon a time to talk as much nonsense as it liked, we have a Committee of Public Safety, whose president has raised himself to the position of a despot. The private member has no separate existence. It matters not a jot what his opinions are, or to what party he once belonged. It is not his business to think, and if thought be irresistible to him, it is not his business to express it. His one duty is to confirm the decrees of the irresponsible Minister, who has ceased to attend the House of Commons, and, immune from criticism, orders the leader of the House to tell the obedient members what is his sovereign purpose. The only restraining influence which the despot feels is fear of the people. He dimly recognises that a general election might upset him from his throne, and like all despots he shudders at the discontent whispered in the country. He knows perfectly well how to deal with the private members of the House, who are the instruments of his will. They are informed, through the usual intermediary, that if they dare to object they will disturb the unanimity of the country. Unanimity indeed! It is a fine unanimity which ordains that only one man in the country shall dare to have a mind at all, and that particular mind a thing of shreds and patches, coloured in ignorance and pinned together with irresolution.

Thus it is that one principle in politics has superseded all

others: no project initiated by the despot or by one of his *camarilla* must ever be opposed. He who dares to murmur a word of independence will find that his *coupon* is cancelled, and will be asked to withdraw from a seat in the cushion of which he finds an annual present of £400. So the House of Commons to-day has become a place of vast silences. The mimic combat, the sham duel, which seemed absurd a few years ago, are no longer engaged in. The member of Parliament is just as much afraid for his seat as the lofty members of the Committee of Public Safety are afraid for their lucrative offices, and measures are passed which will affect the happiness and prosperity of the country for generations without a word of honest protest or sensible comment. What Disraeli said of Peel may be said with greater truth of our present despot. "The right honourable gentleman's horror of slavery extends to every place, except to the benches behind him. There the gang is still assembled, and there the thong of the whip still sounds."

The results of the Coalition's tyranny are very grave. The Reform Bill, passed in the midst of the war and without consulting the people, was asked for by nobody, and was passed in the teeth of a majority of members hostile to it. It will transform not only the constitution, but the manners and the morals of the country. And if any man during its passage dared to raise his voice in criticism, he was told impudently that we were at war, and that it was not the time for party strife. This wholesome dislike of party strife, at the moment when all our energies should have been devoted to beating the Germans, might have been carried a step further back, and have prevented the introduction of a dangerous measure cunningly arranged to destroy the constitution. The war is now over, and the same method of political blackmail is still employed. The Transport Bill, another project of organised enslavement, must not be opposed, because, were it to fail, there might be disturbances in the country. The House of Commons, which has not a profound faith in the family of Geddes, accepts what is thrown to it, and the House of Lords, stripped of the power and self-confidence which it once possessed, contents itself with riddling the measure with just criticism, and then accepting it as it stands.

Meanwhile Mr George, our new despot, while he browbeats both Houses of Parliament, cringes in terror before the apostles of mutiny and revolution. He is strong enough, by deputy, in the Commons' House, which he has not the leisure to enter. He is weak as a wind-blown blade of grass in the country. Without consulting our duly elected representatives, he has handed over the people of

Great Britain bound hand and foot to the miners, merely because Mr Smillie has a voice which frightens him. Already he has dragged us half-way towards the nationalisation of the mines, towards the ruin and corruption which nationalisation has always, and will always, ensure. The question, fully discussed in packed Commissions, may not be mentioned in the House of Commons lest the great Mr Smillie might take umbrage at hostile criticism, and resent by his customary methods the mere speaking of the truth.

The complete suspension of the House of Commons has resulted in a conspiracy of silence and falsehood, which is driving us headlong down the steep places into the sea of revolution. The hotheads of labour, knowing that Mr George stands in awe of them, knowing also that members of Parliament are unwilling to endanger their seats by open speech, have had it all their own way. More than two hundred years ago, in 1701, Swift sketched the situation which prevails to-day. "Nothing is more dangerous or unwise," said he, "than to give way to the first steps of popular encroachments, which is usually done either in hopes of procuring ease and quiet from some vexatious clamour, or else made merchandise and merely bought and sold. This is breaking into a constitution to serve a present expedient or supply a present exigency: the remedy of an empiric to stifle the present pain, but with the certain prospect of sudden and terrible return." Every word of this is as true as it was in the day when it was written, and if the despot and his friends, who are now enslaving us, were not impervious to sense and reason, we should implore them to commit this passage of Swift's writing to their memories, and to repeat it whenever they met in their secret and perilous conclave.

The Coalition procured for us one revolution. The Reform Bill, the Coalition's pet child, procured us another. And the last revolution began, according to custom, with the tyranny of the people. It has concluded, as Swift wrote of another revolution, "in that of a single person; so that the usurping populace is its own dupe, a mere under-worker, and a purchaser in trust for some single tyrant, whose state and power they advance to their own ruin, with as blind an instinct as those worms that die with weaving magnificent habits for beings of a superior nature to their own." The situation is plain. There can be no doubt that, if a halt be not made, we shall speed presently to dissolution. How shall we be saved? Ultimately, by a recurrence of honesty and good faith, by a reawakening of the people from its mad perverted dream. But we cannot wait for this recurrence, for this reawakening. We must find a quick and practical expedient, and the only possible expedient for us is, we admit reluctantly, the restoration of party government, the instant abolishing of the Coalition.

Our governors have been given the freedom to act as they thought best, and they have come nigh to destroying the country. They cannot be trusted to do their work in their own way. They want a fierce and sleepless Opposition. Every word that they say, every project that they devise, must be fearlessly criticised. And we must have an Opposition that indulges in no mimic battles of the wits. It must be a resolute Opposition, composed of men who care more for their country than their seats, and who are prepared to do their duty in the House of Commons without thought of self or expediency. They must take nothing that Mr George and his friends do or say for granted. They must remember that the fear which besets our Ministers is greater than their zeal or their intelligence, and they must fight such heresies as nationalisation at every step with all the courage and energy that are theirs. The power of the House of Commons for evil far exceeds its power for good, and a sturdy Opposition may ensure a stable equilibrium, a period of rest, sound government, and economy, which we all need. The sooner a clog is is put upon a Cabinet which squanders four and a half millions a day in time of peace, the better for our poor bankrupt country. And we see no other way of checking extravagance and revolution than a return to the old system of Ins and Outs, which seemed deplorable before the war—the old system purged of insincerity. For the events of the last three years have proved beyond question that if party government had not existed it would be necessary to invent it.

And then at this inopportune moment there enters the Centre Party upon the scene, promising to abolish for ever the crimes and inanities of partisan government. What it is the centre of we do not know. We are equally ignorant as to where lies its circumference, or as to what is the length of its diameter. We only know that it is born too late. Before the coming of the Coalition we were simple enough to think that if the conflict of parties were suspended, an honest man might be found to devote himself, unchecked and uncriticised, to the service of his country. As always, we overrated the intelligence and morality of our politicians, and it is plain to us all that there is no work left for the Centre Party to accomplish. Moreover, the suspension of party does not mean, as our Central wiseacres appear to think it does, the suspension of principle. Unless we are to fall back into the bottomless pit of opportunism, in which we still flounder, we must make some attempt, feeble though it may be, to distinguish what we believe to be right from what we know to be wrong. The ingenuous leaders of the Centre Party waste no time in distinguishing one policy from another. They prefer to play

blind-hookey with the electors. They have "resolutely withstood the formation of any separate policy as far more likely to harm than to advance their main purpose." That is all very well, and no doubt these ingenuous newcomers into the House of Commons pride themselves upon their severe attitude of detachment. But the time must come when they are asked to make up their minds about the questions which after the war ask for settlement, as they asked, in vain, before Germany made her attack upon Europe.

For instance, between dogmatic Free Trade, or rather Free Imports, and Tariff Reform, there is no central position, no middle way. It is true that if nothing be done to check the easy idle opportunism of the Coalition, we shall have nothing to export except bundles of Bradburys, for which it is not probable that there will be very keen competition abroad. Very soon we shall have no coal to send out of the country in exchange for those commodities of which we stand in need; and as our manufactured goods will surely be undersold in every market of the world, we shall be relieved of the necessity of thinking about imports, either free or dutiable. But in spite of the Centre Party, we do not believe that the Coalition, with all its wastefulness, its indifference, and its chicane, is fastened upon us for ever. The spectacle of Mr Bonar Law solemnly supporting a measure which he himself has described as "undisguised robbery," is not edifying, and suggests an insincerity which transcends our experience even of party government. No organised opportunism, blatant as this is blatant, can live and thrive for many years or months. And the time must come when the ambitious leaders of the Centre Party will be asked to proclaim not merely their existence, but their policy, if they have any.

But if the Centre Party refrains from explaining its opinions upon matters of political controversy, it makes no secret of the fact that it is opposed to Bolshevism. That simple profession of faith is not enough upon which to found a new philosophy of politics. We are all opposed to Bolshevism, except a handful of ruffians and sentimentalists who see a profitable investment in robbery, murder, and torture. If Bolshevism comes to Great Britain, we know perfectly well that the most of respectable citizens will be killed or mutilated, and that the Empire will be brought to a speedy inglorious end. The ritual never varies. If we be not hanged or flung down wells, or starved to death, our nails will be pulled out and our hands will be skinned, while a mob of idle Jews looks on, grinning and smoking large cigars. Nor do we think so ill even of our politicians as to suppose that the Centre Party in opposing these atrocities separates itself either in intelligence or courage from the rest of the community.

However, if the Centre Party does not believe in measures it believes in men. And in its preferences we may discover its true design. It hopes to make Messrs George and Churchill tenants of power for life. Such is its real purpose, such is its real policy; and if its object be to combat Bolshevism, it could not have chosen worse leaders. Now Bolshevism is but the loud expression of class-hatred, and Messrs George and Churchill, as we all know, have shown themselves experts in the easy, dangerous game of stirring up one class against another. Some ten years ago they went up and down the country creating wherever they went a superfluous irrelevant hostility, and their ill-omened rhetoric served them very well at the polls. What they did not understand was that class-hatred, once set alight in the hearts of ignorant men, cannot easily be extinguished. That their idle interested words have had such an effect as they neither foresaw nor desired does not absolve them. They must still bear the burden of responsibility for all the bad feeling and dissension which they thought it profitable to provoke; and if the leaders of the Centre Party were more lavishly endowed with a sense of humour, they might have reflected that the best way to ensure unity of thought and action is not to set thieves to catch thieves. The unity which would be enforced upon the country by the perpetual governance of Messrs George and Churchill appals us no less than the liberty to starve or be tortured offered by the Bolsheviks appals us. And in spite of the Centre Party's brilliant suggestion that "the Prime Minister should galvanise these several interests into a great nationally democratic party under a name of his own choosing," we prefer some semblance of our ancient freedom, and will not readily wear the gag in order that a unity in evil-doing shall prevail in the House of Commons.

The Centre Party, then, will follow into oblivion many other attempts to capture the "machine" in perpetuity. We shall fight Bolshevism and defeat it with leaders more apt for that purpose than hardened begetters of class-hatred. Indeed, the foremost duty of us all is to combat the worst conspiracy against freedom and decency that history has to show us. Moreover, since revolution, which is a definite disease of the body politic, is always accompanied by the same symptoms, we have no difficulty in diagnosing it. After the example of France, the accursed thing known as Leninism should hide nothing from our eyes. Its resemblance in cruelty, sadism, and hypocrisy to its forerunner is complete, and if the ignorant dupes of Bolshevist propaganda in England were permitted to have their way, we know precisely the misery and the ruin that would be in store for us.

To those who still waver in doubt we would commend Mrs Arthur Webster's excel-

lent book, 'The French Revolution' (London: Constable & Co.), in which we may see displayed the whole anatomy of Bolshevism. Though Mrs Webster very wisely does not lean too heavily upon the parallel, it is plain for all to see, and that ear must be deaf indeed that will not hear the warning. The old fairy stories that the French Revolution was a fight for freedom were long since discredited. We know now that that orgie of blood and lust was inspired only by the basest passions, and defended only by the wildest rhetoric. What was hitherto not so well known is that the propaganda which awoke it into being was German in its origin, as was the propaganda of Lenin. The object of the Subversives was nothing more and nothing less than destruction. "There were not ten of us Republicans in 1789," said Camille Desmoulins. They cared neither for doctrine nor for reform. "To make the people happy," said Rabourd de Saint-Etienne, "their ideas must be reconstructed, laws must be changed, morals must be changed, men must be changed, things must be changed, everything, yes, everything must be destroyed, since everything must be remade." Thus they spoke, half-unconscious that they were repeating, parrot-wise, the pernicious and perverted gospel of the Illuminati.

The order of Illuminati, as Mrs Webster points out, was founded by Adam Weishaupt, a professor in the University of Ingolstadt, in Bavaria. What he aimed at was a world-revolution. Not content with destroying his own country, he must glut his eyes upon the spectacle of a Europe in ashes. Louis Blanc describes him "as one of the deepest conspirators that ever existed," and under the name of Spartacus he did his foul and stealthy work. Mrs Webster sets forth his aims, quoting from an English book by John Robison, and his aims are now familiar to us all. Now Robison was a man of practical affairs and a highly distinguished mathematician. He was with Wolfe in Canada, and he fought loyally for James Watt, the engineer. He thus combined in his single brain a knowledge of science and an understanding of the world, and though in the era of revolution his book, 'Proofs of a Conspiracy,' was flouted by the rebels as "a lasting monument of fatuous credulity," we may put a simple faith in it to-day, when we have had a second example before our eyes of the working of revolution. The Order of the Illuminati, then, "abjured Christianity, advocated sensual pleasures, believed in annihilation, and called patriotism and loyalty narrow-minded prejudices, incompatible with universal benevolence; . . . they accounted all princes usurpers and tyrants, and all privileged orders as their abettors; they meant to abolish the laws which protected property accumulated by long-continued and successful industry; and to prevent for the future any

such accumulation; they intended to establish universal liberty and equality, the imprescriptible rights of man, and as preparation for all this they intended to root out all religion and ordinary morality, and even to break the bonds of domestic life, by destroying the veneration for marriage vows, and by taking the education of children out of the hands of the parents." Furthermore, the Illuminati believed that the great object of their Order was paramount, and that its success warranted the commission of what old-fashioned moralists regarded as the worst crimes. Here we have a rough sketch of Leninism. And as those who will not be convinced choose not to believe in the crimes of Leninism, so the intellectuals of Robison's day laughed at him as a credulous person. But the Illuminati, inspiring the Subversives of France, were the begetters of the French Revolution, and the influence of the unspeakable Weishaupt still survives in the murderous miscreants of Russia.

The German is unchanged and unchanging. He is still a Spartacist for others, and having brought about, with the help of Lenin and Trotsky, the destruction of Russia, he hopes to do the same for England. The pamphlets which have been circulated in England are German in origin and inspiration. They are founded upon the teaching of Weishaupt, who did his share in the disintegration of France, and their effect would be as dangerous to this country as they were to France a century ago, if we did not instantly counteract and suppress them. Now pamphlets, composed by cunning brains for the debauchery of the half-baked, are more deadly than dynamite. Wherever they are surprised, they should be suppressed, and those in whose possession they are found should be severely punished. If the law permits the free circulation of treason, then the law should be altered. The risk of the moment demands full powers and their ruthless execution. The doctrines of the Illuminati resulted in the Terror. And if we do not want to face another Terror, such as disgraced France and still disgraces Russia, we should be wise to arrest every Illumined rascal in our midst, and to make it plain that infamous words shall be punished as severely as infamous deeds.

The Terror in Russia, as the Terror in France, is a mere expression of lust and greed. It is always in counter-revolution, imagined, not real, that the murderers profess to find an excuse for massacres. But the real motives of the murders are, and have always been, the hope of theft and the uncontrolled love of bloodshed. In every revolution "domiciliary visits" precede the general use of the scaffold. It is more profitable to rob a rich and innocent man before his death than to be content with the mere shedding of his blood. And so they kill and shriek, until burglary becomes an

affair of high policy, and systematic depopulation appears to be the only duty of statesmanship. Twice we have had our warning, and if we do not take the most vigorous action to check the Bolsheviks in our midst we shall find the assassin's knife at the country's throat. And let it not be supposed that for revolution there is ever a policy of moderation. The false "idealism," which confuses "liberty" with Sadism, must go on to its appointed end. "Whoever stops half-way in revolution," says St Just, "digs his own grave." Marat and Robespierre did not stop half-way; Lenin and Trotsky did not stop half-way; and our revolutionaries, if they ever got a blood-stained hand about the State, would go as far down the road of massacre as their predecessors. It is idle to talk of "the good sense of the British people,"—a phrase constantly heard from the lips of the slothful, self-complacent politician. There is no good sense of the British or any other people. A few silly maxims, which came nobody knows whence, may intoxicate a mob, and an intoxicated mob cannot be stayed in its course of destruction more easily than an undammed lake. It is on our governors, then, if any there be, that we must rely, not upon "the good sense" of the people; and if our governors, such as they are, know nothing of the past, we would ask them to read as a guide to their footsteps, which once tottered in the direction of Prinkipo, the clear, moderate, and apposite account which Mrs Webster has given us of the French Revolution.

One other lesson the French Revolution, like the Russian, has to teach us, and it is this: that wherever revolution breaks out, it is managed by Jews and Germans. What the Jews achieved in France, what they are achieving in Russia, is known to us all. What comes to light more slowly is the part which the international Jews have played in Paris during the last six or seven months. Behind every one of the Allied politicians there has stood a stealthy Jew, who had his money invested in Germany, and sent his heart, gladly and inevitably, where his money was. What the Jews wanted was an easy peace. Justice swims not into their ken. Their breeches-pocket is far more sensitive than their conscience, and their notion of citizenship is the liberty, or the license, to carry on legalised speculation. Here then is another danger which we must face and not fear. We must remember that England exists for the English, France for the French, and that the Jew is nearly always in origin and sympathy not merely a Hebrew but a German. The incubus is there, and is gladly borne by the politician; but it is for us, who are not involved in the intrigue and scandal of politics, to shake it off, and to see that the Jews, the eager plotters of revolution, have nothing whatever to do with

the government of a Christian country.

Nor will Jews be our only foreign enemies if a revolution should be thrust upon us. In Russia, as in France, the murderers have been compelled to employ any rascals of strange blood that came to their hand. We know what the Chinese slaves of the Jewish politicians in Russia have done in the sad business of exterminating innocent men and women and children. The same sort of outrage was observed in France. The master, Jean Baptiste Carrier, who made Nantes a house of slaughter, could not find enough Frenchmen to carry out his bloodthirsty designs. The lack of executioners was the only thing that stood in the way of his brutality. But he did not despair. "In order to carry out the vengeance of this maniac upon the unfortunate city," Mrs Webster tells us, "three companies of bandits, selected for their ferocity, had been recruited. The first of these, which Carrier had named after his idol, 'the company of Marat,' consisted of sixty members who had sworn on enrolment to carry out the doctrines of the People's Friend; the second, known as 'the American Hussars,' was composed of negroes and mulattos; the third, which was called 'the Germanic Legion,' had been formed with German mercenaries and deserters. Thus, as Taine observes, 'it was necessary, in order to find men for the work, to descend not only to the lowest ruffians of France, but to brutes of foreign race and speech.'" We know what is in store for us. If we do not resist the polyglot rascals who would involve us in revolution, we shall witness the degraded spectacle of honest Englishmen murdered by the worst Chinamen and the worst niggers whom brutality can enrol.

Once a year we are invited by the Treasury to contemplate, in the Civil List Pensions, a national disgrace. For this disgrace there is neither palliation nor excuse. There it is for all to see, and we can but hide our shame beneath the first table which presents itself. The politicians care nothing for men who have distinguished themselves in the arts or sciences. Of what use are they to the sacred democracy? If they give pleasure or save thousands of lives, that doesn't matter. They never turned a by-election, and therefore their laborious, unselfish existence is unjustified. So, as a sort of conscience-penny, our country, which will lavish anything which is asked upon the working man, employed or unemployed, finds but a pittance to fling, as a bone to a dog, to those who confer a real benefit upon the world. The proletariat, of course, would resent that anything should be given to him who was superior to itself, and the Government, which bows a willing knee to the proletariat, must needs act the part of a niggard to every man and

every woman who deserve its support.

The analysis of the Civil List Pensions is not a pleasant enterprise. Yet it is important, because it shows us, as in a clear mirror, the true meanness of democracy. For instance, Lady Eleanor Charlotte Turner is presented munificently with £50 a year, a sum which no unemployed person, male or female would look at with patience. And Sir George Turner, her husband, lost his life in the public service. Without a thought of self, he investigated leprosy, and died a miserable death by the disease which he sought to alleviate and to cure. And his wife is presented by a wealthy and spendthrift Government with less than a pound a week. Nothing need be said in condemnation of this vile act, nothing can be said in its excuse. We would merely remind our readers that, if Sir George Turner had done nothing whatever in the public service, his widow would have been far better off.

Nearly every name in this precious list reveals the same insolence, the same heartlessness. Mrs Grace Martin is the daughter of a distinguished landscape painter, Mark Anthony, and she is given, freely and opulently, £30 a year, "in view of the distinction of her father, as a pre-Raphaelite, and of her needy circumstances." A pleasant record truly! Her father was a distinguished painter, and she is in needy circumstances. Therefore a Government which wastes four millions and a half a day is able to grant her the splendid reward of £30 a year. And the Government, which thus munificently requites artistic distinction, is not at the pains to discover where lay the talent of its pensioner's father. Mark Anthony never was a pre-Raphaelite, but, we suppose, if you fling a crust to a beggar, it is not worth while to find out what particular brand of rags he dons.

Go through the pitiable list of doles, and at each dole you will receive a blow in the face, if you take any pride in the life which attempts to rise above the sordid level of pence. As the Government gives with a niggard hand, so it cannot refrain from insult when it gives. "Straitened circumstances," "needy circumstances"—these are the mean excuses of penurious reward. As the help is nugatory, so the impertinence is vast. Nobody on earth would deign to accept from the Government a single penny if his (or her) circumstances were not straitened. It is not pleasant in any circumstances to receive such a dole as a work-shy labourer would decline, and at the same time to be advertised on a penny broad-sheet as "straitened" or "needy." Why the Government is guilty of this hideous meanness and this superfluous impudence is clear to all. The working class, jealous of all those men who display wisdom and shrink not from sacrifice, hate to see a reward conferred upon any one outside itself, and the

Government, which depends upon the votes of the working class, panders to its master's envy and vulgarity. When Mr George brought in his Bill for conferring old-age pensions upon all and sundry, he insisted that no reference should be made to the straitened circumstances of the recipients, whose feelings must not be hurt. The old-age pension, he said in effect, was not a gift, but money well earned. But when Mrs Weale, whose husband made profounder studies in the history of Flemish Art than any scholar of his age, is given the proud sum of £50 a year, we are asked urgently not to forget her "straitened circumstances."

Nobody believes that the Government will ever be well-mannered or magnanimous. And the insults offered year by year to those who have given their lives to the arts and sciences fall upon every artist, every man of science in the country. Our duty lies clear before us. We must establish such a fund ourselves as will support every painter, every writer, every scientific investigator, who sacrifices himself to his craft. Why should they, who honestly care for the things that matter, meekly accept the doles and the insults which the elect of the people choose to throw to them? The disgrace falls upon us all, and we can only hope that those who take a pride in their work will henceforth support their unlucky colleagues, thus relieving our wealthy Government of the intolerable burden of £1200 a year, and saving many honourable men and women from an intolerable and contemptuous insult.

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